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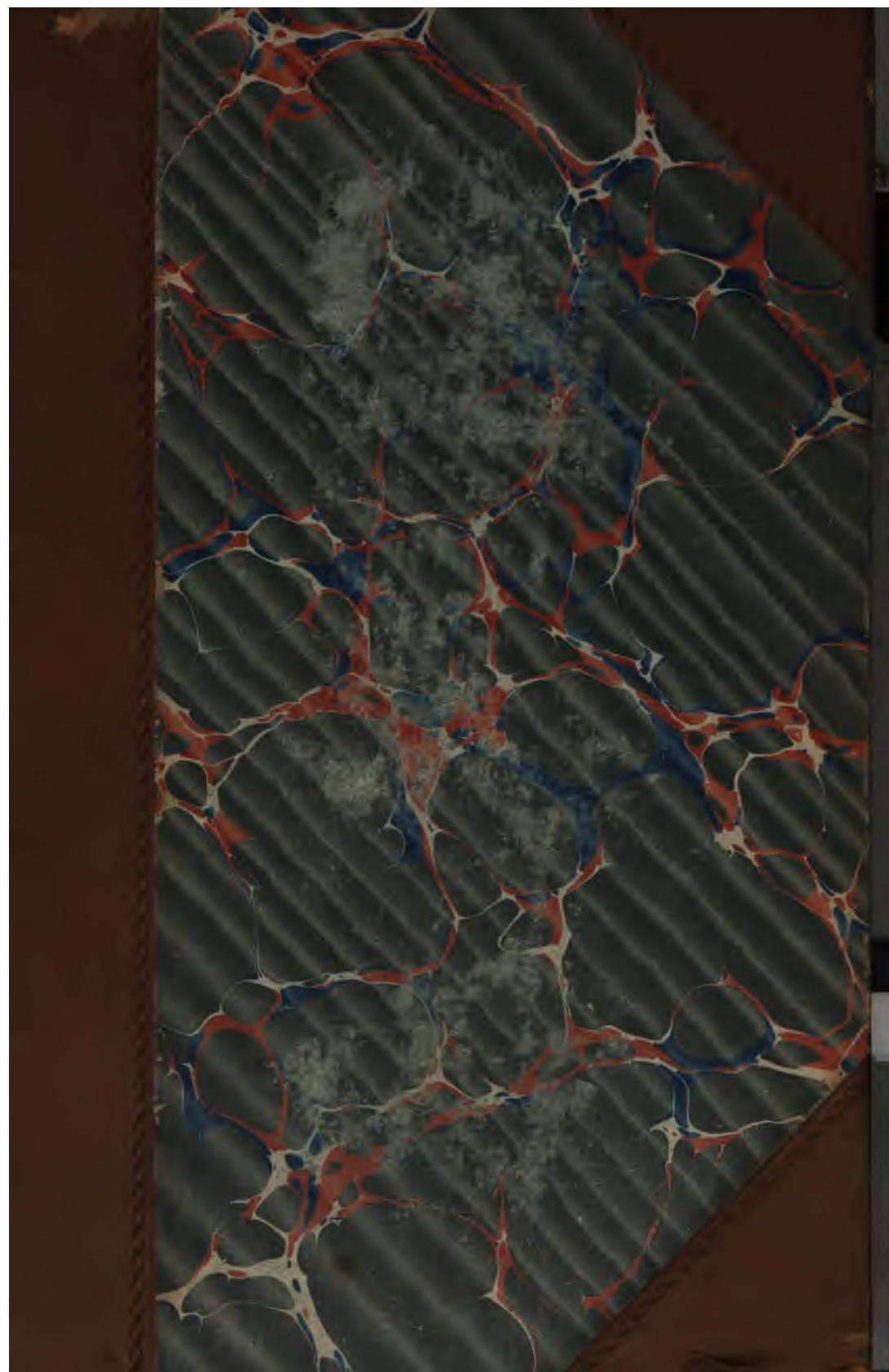
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235.



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THE
HISTORY OF ENGLAND,
FROM THE
ACCESSION OF GEORGE III
1760,
TO
THE ACCESSION OF QUEEN VICTORIA,
1837.

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HISTORY OF ENGLAND,

FROM THE

ACCESSION OF GEORGE III.,

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THE ACCESSION OF QUEEN VICTORIA,

1837.

BY THE REV. T. S. HUGHES, B.D.,

CANON OF PETERBOROUGH.

BEING THE COMPLETION OF THE HISTORY OF ENGLAND FROM THE INVASION
OF JULIUS CÆSAR, TO THE PRESENT REIGN.

THIRD EDITION,

WITH THE AUTHOR'S CORRECTIONS, IMPROVEMENTS, AND ENLARGEMENT.

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CONTENTS

OF

THE FIFTH VOLUME.

CHAPTER XLIV.

GEORGE III.—1801.

Alteration in the style and titles appertaining to the imperial crown, &c.—Origin of the northern confederacy, or renewal of the armed neutrality—Negotiations on the subject—Meeting of parliament—King's speech—Debates on the address, involving an inquiry into the conduct of ministers, &c.—Address carried—Mr. Pitt's determination to resign office; reasons, &c. considered—Change of ministry—Motion for an inquiry into the state of the nation—Debates thereon—Mr. Pitt's explanation of his conduct—Motion rejected—Bill to exclude the clergy from sitting in the house of commons—Lord Moira's act to relieve insolvent debtors—Renewal of the suspension of the habeas corpus act—Additional supplies—Conjectures respecting the motives of the ex-minister, &c.—Preparations to resist the northern confederacy—Battle of Copenhagen—Dissolution of the northern confederacy—New treaty—Affairs of Portugal—Expedition to Egypt—Expulsion of the French from that country, &c.—Menaces of an invasion—Attack on the French flotilla—Conquests in the North Sea, and in the East and West Indies—Gallant action of sir James Saumarez—Negotiations for peace—Preliminaries signed—Considerations and conditions—Definitive treaty—Reflections—Notice of alterations produced in various classes of society page 1

VOL. V. b

CHAPTER XLV.

Opening of the imperial parliament—King's speech—Debates on the address—Bonaparte's plans—Arrears of the civil list—Pecuniary affairs relating to the prince of Wales—Conduct of Mr. Pitt toward the ministry—Financial scheme—Army and navy, &c.—Alteration made in the sinking fund—Mr. Abbot chosen speaker of the house of commons—Honors paid to Mr. Pitt—Debate on the definitive treaty—Motions relative to the slave-trade—Militia act—Parliamentary rewards—French expedition to St. Domingo—Naval mutiny at Bantry-bay—Bonaparte's extension of his power and influence on the continent—Confirmation of his authority at home—*Concordat*—Institution of the legion of honor—Attractions of his capital—The French recover Guadeloupe, but fail at St. Domingo—Elections in Great Britain—Doubts in the public mind respecting peace, &c.—Change in the sentiments of political parties—Meeting of parliament—King's speech; and address carried—Debates on the supplies, military force, &c.—Increasing dissension between the two governments—Trial and execution of colonel Despard—Opening of parliament—King's speech, and address—Debates—Offer of a coalition made to Mr. Pitt, and rejected—Russian mediation offered without success—Ultimatum proposed to the French government—Lord Whitworth leaves Paris—Seizure of French ships in British ports, and retaliation by Bonaparte—King's message to parliament announcing war—Declaration—Discussion in both houses—Address carried by a large majority—Vote of censure on ministers negatived—Subjects of national defence, finance, supplies, &c.—War declared against Holland—Militia bill—Army of reserve—Levy *en masse*—The measure modified—Volunteers—French preparations for the invasion of England—Act to relieve catholics—Lord Ellenborough's act—Clergy bill—Motion of thanks, &c. to the volunteer corps—Session closes—Speech from the throne—Correspondence between the prince of Wales and his majesty—Irish insurrection—Execution of Emmett and other traitors—Movements and preparations of the French in consequence of hostilities being renewed—Naval successes of Great Britain page 44

CHAPTER XLVI.

Meeting of parliament, and king's speech, &c.—Failure of Russian mediation announced—Suspension of the habeas corpus, and martial law, continued in Ireland—Army estimates, volunteers, &c.—General effective force in the army and navy—The king's indisposition, and speedy recovery—Opposition to the ministry

joined by Mr. Pitt—His motion respecting the naval department lost—Debates on the measures of defence—Ministers, left in small majorities, determine to resign—Measure of finance brought forward, and the cabinet dissolved—Mr. Pitt again at the head of affairs—His supposed wishes, and attempts to form a cabinet—Slave-trade abolition carried in the lower, and lost in the upper house—Additional force act—Corn laws—Arrears and regulations of the civil list—Prorogation of parliament—Internal affairs of France—Execution of the duc d'Enghien—Bonaparte assumes the imperial dignity—Francis II. relinquishes his supremacy over the Germanic empire—Naval transactions—Seizure of sir George Rumbold—His liberation—Rigor of the French government—Failure of the Catamaran project—Coalition of Pitt and Addington—Meeting of parliament—Supplies—Roman catholic petition—Impeachment of lord Melville—Pitt's last speech—Napoleon crowned king of Italy at Milan—Formation of a new coalition against France—Dissentions in the British cabinet, and decline of Mr. Pitt's health . page 86

CHAPTER XLVII.

Bonaparte's views and preparations respecting the invasion of England—Pursuit of the French fleet by lord Nelson, &c.—Sir Robert Calder's action, and consequent disappointment of Napoleon's schemes—Villeneuve takes shelter in Cadiz—Nelson appointed to the command of the fleet sent against him—Development of Napoleon's plan against the continental powers—His advance—Surrender of Mack at Ulm—Manœuvres of admiral Collingwood off Cadiz—Arrival of lord Nelson—His manœuvres and instructions to his officers, &c.—Villeneuve with the combined fleets puts to sea—Preparations, &c. for battle—Action of Trafalgar, and death of Nelson, &c.—Sir Richard Strachan's victory over Dumanoir—Bonaparte's operations in Austria—Dispute with Prussia—His advance towards Brunn against the allied emperors—Disposition of his army—Battle of Austerlitz—Negotiations—Napoleon's indignation against Prussia—Peace of Presburg, and consequences of it—Proclamation against the court of Naples—Conduct of its cabinet, &c.—Its crown conferred on Joseph Bonaparte—The old court retire to Palermo—State of Ireland—Meeting of parliament, &c.—Death and character of Mr. Pitt—New administration under lord Grenville—Affairs of the prince and princess of Wales—Negotiations for peace, &c.—Speech of Mr. Canning relating to lord Ellenborough—Mr. Wyndham's act to limit military service, &c.—The budget, &c.—Bill for the examination of public accounts, and improvement in various departments—East Indian expenditure—Trial of lord Melville—Abolition of the slave-trade—Mr. Canning's opposition—Mr. Fox's illness and death, &c.—Consequent changes in some ministerial departments—Admiral Duck-

worth's victory—Capture of the Cape of Good Hope—Expedition to Buenos Ayres—Dispute with America—State of Prussia and Naples with regard to France—Battle of Maida—Conduct of Prussia—Her preparations of war—Manœuvres of Napoleon—Battles of Jena and Auerstadt—Napoleon enters Berlin—Berlin decree—Alteration of the continental relations by Bonaparte—Insurrection of the Poles—Sebastiani's intrigues at Constantinople—War between Russia and the Porte . . . page 120

CHAPTER XLVIII.

Meeting of parliament—Attacks on ministers—Financial arrangements—Slave-trade abolition, &c.—Bill for removing disabilities from the Roman catholics—Produces the dismissal of ministers—New administration—Conduct of the king generally approved by the country—Address of the city of London—Indignation of the opposition—Trial of strength between the two parties—Dissolution of parliament—Meeting of the new one—King's speech and address—Debates, &c.—Prorogation on the fourteenth of August—Events of the war carried on against Russia and Prussia by Napoleon—Treaties of Tilsit—Napoleon's plan of prohibiting British commerce from European ports—British orders in council—Bombardment of Copenhagen, and seizure of the Danish fleet—Indignation of the emperor Alexander at the conduct of Great Britain—Failure of sir John Duckworth's expedition to Constantinople—Unsuccessful invasion of Egypt—Disasters in South America—Capture of Curaçao—French invasion of Portugal, whose royal family retire to Brazil—Milan decree issued by Napoleon—Disputes with the United States—Death of cardinal York—Louis XVIII. arrives in Britain—Capture of Danish West Indian islands 181

CHAPTER XLIX.

Affairs of Spain—Napoleon's designs on the crown of that country—How accomplished—Resistance of the Spanish people—Joseph Bonaparte made king of Spain—His retreat from Madrid, in consequence of the surrender of Dupont's army—Spanish deputies arrive in England—The cause of Spain taken up by the British government—Different views taken of it—Meeting of the British parliament—Debates on the expedition to Copenhagen—Censures provoked by Mr. Canning—Peter Plymley's letters—Roman catholic petition—Motion respecting the droits of admiralty—Mutiny bill, and local militia—Finances, &c.—Mode to reduce the national debt—Bill against the grant of offices in reversion—Alterations in the criminal law—Also in the Scotch

courts of justice—Act to prevent distillation from grain—Discussion of Spanish affairs—Prorogation of parliament—Contest between Russia and Sweden—Changes effected by Napoleon in the state of continental affairs, and of France—Operations of the British fleet in the Mediterranean—Conduct of lord Collingwood—Statistical summary of British affairs since the peace of Amiens—Affairs of Portugal, to the convention of Cintra—Articles of that treaty—Court of inquiry, &c.—State of Spain—Plans of Napoleon—Meeting of sovereigns at Erfurth, &c.—Bonaparte's advance into Spain—Sir John Moore's campaign—Battle of Corunna, &c. page 217

CHAPTER I.

State of connexion between Great Britain and Spain—King's speech—Addresses, &c.—Debates on the Spanish campaign—Disposition of the ministers and people respecting the war—Militia bill—Soldiers and seamen voted—Charges against the duke of York—Discovery of abuses in East India appointments, places under government, seats in parliament, &c.—Lord Castlereagh's conduct—Mr. Curwen's bill—Charge made by Mr. Madocks against the treasury respecting seats in parliament; by colonel Wardle against the general expenditure of the country—Sir Francis Burdett's motion and plan for parliamentary reform—Supplies—Disclosures respecting the Dutch commissioners—Cause of Spain revives by the Austrian war—Disposition of the French armies, &c.—Evil disposition of the Spanish government—Siege and fall of Saragossa—Affairs of Portugal under sir John Cradock, to the arrival of sir A. Wellesley—The latter lands at Lisbon—His deliberations and plans—Campaign in the north of Portugal, to the expulsion of Soult—Operations of Soult and Ney—Sir A. Wellesley's difficulties, &c.—Those of Victor, and his operations—Soult's movements, &c.—State of the British, French, and Spanish forces—Sir A. Wellesley's advance into Spain—March along the valley of the Tagus—Bad conduct of Cuesta, and the Spanish government, &c.—Operations of Victor—Treachery of the supreme junta—Battle of Talavera—Subsequent operations to the cantonment of the British troops about Badajos—Ulterior military and political proceedings in Spain to the time when sir A. Wellesley retired into Portugal—Napoleon's entry into Vienna—His decree against Rome—Is excommunicated by Pius VII.—Battle of Wagram, and peace of Vienna—State of Europe—British expeditions against Naples and Walcheren—Duel between lord Castlereagh and Mr. Canning—Changes in the ministry—National jubilee—Affairs of the princess of Wales—Domestic incidents, &c.—British relations with America 289

CHAPTER LI.

Opening of parliament—Address, and debates on it—Carried in favor of ministers—Motion carried for a committee of inquiry—Exclusion of strangers from the gallery of the house of commons—Lord Chatham's conduct reprehended—Lord Porchester's resolutions respecting ministers negatived; and a vote of approval carried—Proceedings of sir Francis Burdett, in consequence of which he is committed to the Tower, &c.—Navy estimates—Bills against granting offices in reversion, and for a finance committee—Mr. Horner's motion for a bullion committee carried—Pension to lord Wellington—Proposals of sir Samuel Romilly to alter the criminal law—The budget—Petition of the Irish catholics rejected; also a motion for parliamentary reform—Lord Grey's motion in the lords for an address to his majesty on the state of the nation rejected—Addresses on the slave-trade—Twelfth report of the commission of military inquiry—Prorogation of parliament—The king's illness—Causes assigned for it, in public agitation, the affair of the duke of Cumberland, and the death of the princess Amelia—Meeting of parliament—Precedent of 1788 followed—Mr. Perceval's three resolutions—Debates on them—Determination of parliament to proceed by bill in the formation of a regency—Restricted regency accepted by the prince of Wales—Protest of the royal dukes—Proceedings of parliament in this affair—Regency bill passed—Affairs of the continent—Causes of Napoleon's declining power, when his prospects seemed most bright—Great crisis in the affairs of England—Our foreign conquests—Prospect of affairs in the peninsula—Epitome of operations in Spain—Lord Wellington's situation and campaign in Portugal, &c.—Domestic incidents
page 355

CHAPTER LII.

Opening of parliament by the regent—His sentiments regarding the present cabinet, &c.—Distress of the times—Subject of military discipline—Report of the bullion committee—Conduct of lord King, and consequent resolution of parliament—Lord Sidmouth's motion respecting dissenting preachers—Affairs of the Irish catholics—Amendment of the criminal law—Restoration of the duke of York—Disturbances in Ireland; and of the manufacturing districts in England—Dreadful murders in London—General state of Europe and America—Affairs of Spain—Soult's invasion of Estremadura—Siege of Badajos—Movement in Andalusia, leading to the battle of Barosa, &c.—Fall of Badajos—Massena's retreat from Santarem commences—Lord

Wellington's pursuit—Quarrel between Massena and Ney—Massena crosses the frontier—Almeida invested by the British—Lord Wellington sets off to visit marshal Beresford in Estremadura—Operations of the British army about Badajos—Wellington's return to his army in the north—Massena's advance—Battle of Fuentes Onoro—Massena resigns the command to Marmont—Lord Wellington sets out for Badajos—Operations of marshal Beresford in that quarter—Soult's advance from Andalusia—Battle of Albuera—Wellington's arrival—Attack on Badajos, which fails—Positions of the British and French armies—Soult and Marmont retire—French operations in Catalonia and Valencia, &c.—Lord Wellington's position with regard to the Portuguese government—His resolute but judicious conduct—Returns to his army on the Coa—Grievances which he endured—Advance of Marmont—Combat of El Bodon—Subsequent movements, and investment of Ciudad Rodrigo—Remarkable exploit of sir Rowland Hill at Arroyo Molino—Suchet's operations, capture of Murviedro, and investment of Valencia—Naval victory of captain Hoste in the Adriatic—Action of captain Barrie in Sagone-bay—Of captains Ferris and Richardson at the mouth of the Garonne—Capture of French frigates off Madagascar—Conquest of Java—Election of a chancellor at Cambridge page 417

CHAP.
XLIV.

1801.

premier remained at his post, until the king's health became injured by a violent fever; when farther delay was occasioned. The number of men proposed for the army was 193,187 regulars, 78,046 militia, and 31,415 fencibles; composing an effective force, independent of volunteers, of 302,648 men: the number proposed for naval service amounted to 135,000; and when some objections were urged against the measure, Mr. Pitt alleged the necessity of extraordinary preparations, since we might have to contend for principles which were essential to our maritime power. The house being now formed into a committee of ways and means, he stated the supplies at £42,197,000; of which Ireland was to pay £4,324,000, and England the remainder: a loan of £25,500,000 would be required for one country, and £2,500,000 for the other; but the flourishing state of commerce, and the general prosperity, were represented as fully able to bear this pressure: the taxes were numerous in detail, embracing various conveniences, many of which by habit had become necessities of life, especially tea and sugar: one very severely felt by various classes, was an addition of ten per cent. on paper; which impost, operating as a prohibition, very much diminished its productiveness. The peers were on the point of discussing the propriety of a motion made by lord Darnley, for inquiry into the conduct of government, and the state of public affairs, when the earl of Carlisle advised a postponement of the debate; it being well known that the principal members of the cabinet were disposed to retire, for reasons of a delicate and interesting nature: lord Grenville then explained the reasons of their resignation:—‘We wished,’ he said, ‘that the benefits of the union should be rendered as great and extensive as possible, by the removal of certain disabilities under which a large portion of the inhabitants of Ireland labor: imagining that this measure could only be effectual by coming from the executive government, we felt it our duty to propose it to those who direct his majesty’s councils; but it was not deemed eligible, and we were unable to prevail.

As our opinion of its policy remained unaltered, and we still think this measure alone capable of establishing the tranquillity and prosperity of the empire on a permanent basis, we consider ourselves bound to retire: accordingly, we have tendered to his majesty the resignation of our several employments, and he has been graciously pleased to dispense with our services.' After commenting on the good effects of past exertions, his lordship adverted to their successors in office; and added:—'It is our consolation to reflect, that the same vigorous line of conduct will be still pursued: no change of measures will take place; but the system, which has already proved so salutary, will be maintained by our successors: though we may differ from them in some points, in most there is no difference between us; and while they continue to act in a firm, resolute, and manly manner, they shall have our steady support.' Lord Spencer confirmed the accuracy of this statement regarding the cause of change in administration.

CHAP.
XLIV.
1801.

His majesty, before his indisposition, had appointed lord Hawkesbury secretary of state for the foreign department, and placed lord St. Vincent at the head of the admiralty: after his recovery, he conferred on Mr. Addington, through the recommendation of Mr. Pitt, the two posts which that minister resigned.

Mr. Addington had acted with great propriety and impartiality, as speaker of the house of commons; but his talents were better suited to the duties of that chair, than the arduous office to which he was now elevated, in times which demanded political talents of the first order. Lord Eldon, chief justice of the common pleas, received the great seal:² lords Hobart and

Ministry
of Mr.
Addington.

² On this occasion he made an insertion in his Anecdote Book, from which the following is extracted:—'Upon the duty of a subject to obey the commands of his king in accepting office, I have some notions which I believe are much out of fashion. In the year 1801, I became chancellor on the formation of Mr. Addington's administration. I have mentioned the fact as to my promise to his majesty in 1799 with respect to the chancellorship; that it may be known to my family, that I was indebted for that office to the king himself, and not, as some supposed, to Mr. Addington; although it is but justice to him to add, that he so conducted himself with respect to me, that my feelings toward him were the same as if he had been the instrument by whom the king was prevailed on to promote me to the office.' Again he observes, 'I do not know what made George III so fond of

CHAP.
XLIV.
1801.

Pelham were nominated secretaries of state in the room of Mr. Dundas and the duke of Portland: Mr. Yorke succeeded Mr. Windham as secretary at war; and his brother, lord Hardwicke, was destined for the viceregal office in Ireland: lord Lewisham was placed at the head of the board of control; and in this general change the duke of Portland and lord Westmoreland alone retained their stations in the cabinet; the former as president of the council, the latter as lord privy seal.

The long-expected motion of lord Darnley produced a spirited debate: after strongly censuring the political mismanagement and unprecedented prodigality of the late minister, he proposed that such an inquiry should be instituted, as might point out remedies for the disorders of the state: he was ably supported by the earl of Carlisle, the marquis of Lansdowne, and earl Fitzwilliam; but lord Grenville was at the head of a majority of peers, who effectually counteracted his design; in which, however, the public now took an increased interest.

In the lower house, the necessity of inquiry was strongly urged by Mr. Grey; who remarked, 'that in the best times of our constitution such investigations had been permitted, with very beneficial effects; though by the late premier they had been discountenanced and exploded: he hoped, however, that the new minister would not discourage a scrutiny, which was loudly called for by a series of ill-concerted schemes: it was idle boasting of conquests, to a people groaning under a ruinous weight of taxation; while the great object of the war,—a repression of the power of France,—was so far from being effected, that, by the folly of our late ministers, she had reached a point of aggrandisement, to which Louis XIV. had never aspired. Their imbecility had encouraged the designs of an enemy, at whose humiliation they aimed: not knowing how to direct their efforts, they had acted, not as the

me; but he *was* fond of me.' When he gave me the great seals, he drew them from under his coat, on the left side, and observed, 'I give them to you from my heart.'—*Life of Lord Eldon*, vol. i. p. 368.

adversaries, but as the friends of France: from year to year, they had held out false promises and delusive hopes: they had added £270,000,000 to the public debt, and £17,000,000 to the annual taxes; yet amidst this distress, they boasted of leaving the country in a most flourishing state, and thereby added insult to injury: finally, they had increased the influence of the crown, in proportion as they had invaded the liberties of the people.' Mr. Grey's motion, after having been strenuously supported by sir William Young and lord Temple, called up Mr. Pitt in defence of himself, and the system which he had pursued.

CHAP.
XLIV.
1801.

He stated, that he should have kept silence, or said very little, but for the insinuations which had been thrown out relative to his retreat from office: it was not from a sense of the unimportance of the question, that he felt unwilling to obtrude himself on their notice; but because the decision might safely be left to the judgment of the house: it was not to be supposed that the arguments of the mover and his friends could alter the principles on which that house had acted for the last eight years: the same system still demanded the support of parliament; and if contrary principles should prevail, national ruin could not be far distant: of such ruin, however, there was no appearance; because there was no probability that the advice of those, who by their arguments supported our enemies, would be taken as a remedy for alleged evils: he was sorry to find some members, who had hitherto concurred with his opinions, inclined to vote for a motion adverse to him, because they had no confidence in his friends, the new ministers; such conduct being not only unfair and unkind to himself, but injurious to the public. The persons who now claimed the confidence of this house professed the principles of those who had long enjoyed it: but gentlemen demurred to the claim, alleging that they must know why the late ministers resigned office, and how their successors are disposed to act: he did not suppose that they really desired any information on the

Explanations of
Mr. Pitt.

CHAP.
XLIV.

1801.

latter point; for they knew the abilities and characters of the new leaders of administration; but on the former topic, he would communicate what he had no wish to conceal: he was inclined to believe that the few remaining benefits, of which the catholics had not yet participated, might be safely added to the favors which had been so bounteously granted to them in the present reign: before the union, this step would have been hazardous; but the danger ceased when the protestant establishment was more fully secured. It was a comprehensive system which he wished to propose; to relinquish points certainly intended once as securities, but which he deemed in some respects ineffectual; and to procure a more consistent and rational security both in church and state, by varying the mode, without subverting the principle, which the wisdom of our ancestors had adopted: he only proposed to take away those restrictions which no reasonable man would wish to enforce, if sufficient security could exist without them; he did not think that the grant of high offices to catholics, or their admission into parliament, with such guards and constitutional tests as he or others might advise, would be attended with danger: but, when he submitted this affair to the consideration of the cabinet, such objections were made to it by high authority, that he found himself debarred from bringing it forward in that mode which was most likely to render it successful. If the measure had been one of little importance, he would have yielded his opinion, and retained office; but, as it appeared to him so momentous, that he could not conscientiously abandon it, he deemed it a point of duty to retire: it was not true that he had pledged himself to the catholics, either before or since the union, to recommend their case to parliament: they merely expected it, from being acquainted with his sentiments on the subject. In adverting to the war, he boasted of the success which had attended it; but surprised the house by speaking of the 'unexampled economy' with which it had been conducted: he strongly repro-

bated the pretensions of the Russian confederacy; and concluded with expressing his decided opposition to the motion.

CHAP.
XLIV.
1801.

Mr. Fox, beginning with the neutral question, observed, that he could not fully agree with the northern confederates in the opinion, 'that free bottoms make free goods;' yet he wished for greater latitude in that respect than Mr. Pitt and his successors were inclined to allow; nor did he think that the claim of search, when one or more ships of war escorted a fleet of traders, ought to be enforced, unless very strong grounds of suspicion existed. He exulted in the triumphs of our navy, but hoped that it might not be employed in such a contest as that which ministers were now provoking: to the general management of the war, he could not give the praise which the late cabinet arrogated to themselves; for ill-concerted expeditions marked its progress; disasters had occurred which might easily have been avoided; and the national resources had been shamefully wasted: insincere negotiations also had been carried on to dupe the people, and a fair offer of peace scornfully rejected on pretence of its being the first consul's interest to take an early opportunity of violating it: on the whole, an inquiry seemed to promise benefit; especially as the new minister appeared devoted to the old system. This insinuation called up Mr. Addington, who denied that he was pledged to any system; and assured the house that his conduct should be influenced solely by a regard for the general welfare. He was supported in his resistance to inquiry by a majority of 186.

The rev. Horne Tooke having been elected a representative of Old Sarum, a question arose respecting the eligibility of persons in holy orders to a seat in the house of commons: lord Temple took the lead in it, and a committee was appointed to search for precedents. His lordship contended, that in the reigns of Elizabeth and James I., the inferior clergy petitioned for this right, but did not presume to claim it; and the house had in many instances rejected clerical intruders: as to Mr. Horne Tooke's alleged abandon-

CHAP.
XLIV.

1801.

ment of the priesthood, he denied that any man, once ordained, could divest himself of the clerical character; he therefore moved 'that the late election of Old Sarum should be superseded by a new choice.' Mr. Addington was of opinion, that at the time when the clergy sat in that house, they were not regarded as representatives of the people; and that there was no instances of the return of members described as in holy orders: he wished, however, that the dispute should be decided by a bill, rather than by a premature motion for a new writ; and sir William Scott strongly recommended the bill on the ground of reason as well as law. Mr. Tooke contended that nothing but positive assertion, unsupported by scriptural authority, ecclesiastical law, church history, or parliamentary precedent, had been advanced by the advocates of the bill: he declared his readiness to co-operate with the minister in a general act for the exclusion of the clergy, if it would afford a prospect of an increase in moral and religious wisdom; but he objected to the practice of punishing an individual by an *ex post facto* law. A bill of exclusion passed both houses; though it was opposed by lord Thurlow as unconstitutional and unjust: Mr. Tooke, however, was permitted to remain a member of the present parliament until its dissolution should take place.

In this first session of the united legislature, a peer of both realms, the philanthropic lord Moira, succeeded in procuring an act to relieve insolvent debtors, who having, without fraud, incurred debts not exceeding £1500, should surrender the whole of their effects; from which alone, and not from the abridgment of personal liberty, creditors could receive any benefit: in the course of the session various new regulations were made for encouraging the importation of wheat, American flour, and rice, to lessen the growing pressure of scarcity.

The new minister thought himself bound to follow the example of his predecessor in vigilantly guarding against the intrigues of sedition; and on the report of a secret committee, strengthened by an opinion that

disaffected persons were endeavoring to turn temporary distress among the people into serious discontent, he proposed and carried a renewal of the habeas corpus suspension act. Whatever might be his reluctance to increase the public burdens, he found it expedient to demand additional supplies; and, in consequence of the suggestions of Mr. Tierney, moved a series of resolutions, importing that the amount of the funded debt on the first of February, 1793, was £238,231,000, but that the commissioners for its redemption had reduced it to £227,989,000; that after a lapse of eight years, it amounted to £484,365,000, when £52,000,000, purchased by the commissioners, were deducted; that the annual charge incurred by it, at the former period, was £10,325,000, and at the latter £20,700,000; that, the sum to be raised in Great Britain for the current year, the interest of the aggregate debt included, was nearly £69,000,000; and that our future peace establishment, without any naval or military augmentation beyond that fixed at the last peace, could not be estimated at less than £28,979,000. These motions were sanctioned by the house, and recorded as points of reference; when the session terminated on the first of July.

Mr. Addington entered on his arduous duties supported by the good will and personal esteem of most parties in parliament; and as Mr. Pitt individually rendered him efficient assistance, this led many to suspect, not only that the ex-minister acted as chief manager behind the scenes, but that his retirement was merely a temporary expedient to get rid of an implied promise to the catholics, and to cast the odium of refusal on irresponsible shoulders: this suspicion was heightened, when they observed how the new ministers were treated by some of the late premier's satellites; especially by Canning, who neither in his speeches nor his writings affected to conceal the contempt with which he regarded them; ascribing their pacific disposition to pusillanimity, and their moderation to weakness; while he designated their oratory as the mere drivelling of dotards: hence it was thought,

CHAP.
XLIV.

1801.

that Mr. Pitt, though not unwilling that they should do their destined work, was anxious that their power should cease with their vocation, and that they should never acquire that consideration in the country which might enable them to struggle for place when it was thought proper to depose them. Though the premier retired from office without any compensation for his previous labors, this was not the case with all the members of his cabinet; for lord Grenville obtained, in addition to other sources of emolument during his own life, a pension during that of his lady; Mr. Dundas was soon created a peer by the title of viscount Melville, with an annuity of £2000 from the East India company; and lord Loughborough was gratified with the earldom of Rosslyn.

War with
the north-
ern powers.

All attempts at accommodation with the confederated powers by negotiation having failed, recourse was had to stronger measures. In the beginning of this year an embargo had been laid on Swedish, Danish, and Russian ships, as a matter of retaliation; and our envoys at the northern courts had received instructions to make known his majesty's determination not to recognise their new naval code: but as they seemed equally determined to reject all remonstrances, an appeal to arms could no longer be delayed.

The prince regent, who governed Denmark for his father, and had been long making preparations for war, was now joined by the king of Prussia, who seized this occasion to invade Hanover, which he had solemnly guaranteed, and to reduce that country under his own dominion; while the landgrave of Hesse took forcible possession of Hamburg with 15,000 troops, and compelled its senate to lay an embargo on British merchandise. During these proceedings, a naval armament had assembled in Yarmouth roads, consisting of eighteen ships of the line and frigates, with numerous bomb-vessels and gun-boats, having on board several regiments of marines and riflemen, under the command of a gallant officer, colonel W. Stewart: the whole force was placed under sir Hyde Parker, a good and generous man, but a weak and vacillating officer;

whom Nelson, who was appointed second in command, found at his station, 'nervous about dark nights and fields of ice:'³ this was altogether an unworthy arrangement; discreditable both to ministers and to the king, who seems on most occasions to have treated the hero of the Nile with studied neglect:⁴ it had not yet become the fashion to confide in well-tried and trustworthy officers; but to decline the service of his country, under any commander, or under any circumstances, was not a part of Nelson's character. The fleet, after much useless delay in Yarmouth roads, sailed on the twelfth of March, carrying Mr. Vansittart as an envoy; for our cabinet unwisely endeavored even now to obtain its ends by negotiation, occasioning a delay which was dearly paid for by the best blood of Britain and Denmark. According to the Danes themselves, the intelligence that a fleet had arrived off the Sound, while their means of defence were far from complete, produced a much greater alarm in Copenhagen, than its actual arrival before that city, when they had well profited by the leisure so absurdly given them, to strengthen their fortified places. All this was directly contrary to Nelson's wishes: but at the Scaw, Mr. Nicholas Vansittart left the armament, to proceed with his flag of truce to the capital; whence he returned with our envoy Mr. Drummond, and with a report, that he had left the Danish government hostile in the highest degree to that of Great Britain, and in a state of preparation far exceeding what our cabinet had considered possible. Nelson, however, was not one of these slow negotiators: he had a mind prompt to act; and the word 'fail' was not in his vocabulary:

CHAP.
XLIV.
1801.

³ Southey's *Life of Nelson*.

⁴ Many instances might be selected; but the following testimony will suffice: it alludes to Nelson's first presentation at court after the glorious victory of the Nile: — 'Nelson is here; he gave me an account of his reception at court, which was not very flattering to him, after having been the admiration of that of Naples. His majesty merely asked him if he had recovered his health; and then, without waiting for an answer, turned to general —, and talked to him near half an hour, in great good humor: it could not be about his successes.' — *Life of Lord Collingwood*, vol. i. p. 113. Since this was written, Nelson's authentic Dispatches have been published; and we may perhaps ascribe his majesty's 'studied neglect' to that very 'admiration' bestowed by the court of Naples upon Nelson, and the means by which it was obtained: in this case we must give the king credit for his *personal* conduct.

CHAP.
XLIV.

1801.

the greater the difficulties the more energetic were his exertions, and the more certain his success: accordingly he advised that no time should be lost in attacking the enemy; and luckily, sir Hyde Parker yielding to his energetic persuasions, consented to force the passage of the Sound:⁵ this was effected without loss; the ships keeping near to the Swedish shore, and thus avoiding the heavy fire of Cronenburg-castle, the governor of which had previously declared that he would not permit them to pass it unmolested. On the thirty-first of March, our fleet anchored between the isle of Huen and Copenhagen; but sir Hyde, lord Nelson, and admiral Graves, with some other officers, proceeded in a schooner to reconnoitre the enemy's preparations; when they found a formidable line of nineteen ships and floating batteries, lying in the king's channel, between a large shoal and the city, flanked at one end by the strong forts of the Crown islands near the mouth of the harbor: some line-of-battle ships also guarded the harbor itself; and heavy batteries were erected on the isle of Amak.

Battle of
Copen-
hagen.

Nelson, with his usual zeal, offered to lead the attack; requiring for that service ten sail of the line, with all the smaller craft: sir Hyde, having added two line-of-battle ships to the number demanded, prudently left the business to his management; and after the intricate channel had been sounded and buoyed under Nelson's own inspection, the whole squadron moved forward on the morning of the second of April. The difficulty of the navigation and ignorance of the pilots were so great, that, notwithstanding every possible precaution, three of the ships grounded; while others were unable to take their proper station in the line; and, but for the quick discernment and promptitude of

⁵ 'Here you are (said Nelson) with almost the safety, certainly with the honor of England more intrusted to you, than ever yet fell to the lot of any British officer: on your decision it depends, whether our country shall be degraded in the eyes of Europe, or whether she shall rear her head higher than ever: again do I repeat, never did our country depend so much on the success of any fleet as on this. How best to honor that country and abate the pride of her enemies by defeating their schemes, must be the subject of your deepest consideration as commander-in-chief; and if what I have to offer can be the least useful in forming your decision, you are most heartily welcome.'—*Dispatches*, vol. iv. p. 296.

Nelson himself, who, when the grounded vessels did not answer his signal to close with the enemy, instantly altered the order of sailing, the whole object of the expedition would have been frustrated by the greater part of his fleet going ashore. Each ship, as she arrived nearly opposite to her appointed station, let her anchor go by the stern, and presented her broad-side to the enemy; the distance at which the action took place being about a cable's length: of the gun-brigs, no more than one could be brought into action through the baffling currents; and only two bomb-vessels could reach their proper station on the Middle Ground, so as to open their mortars on the arsenal, firing over the contending fleets. Captain Riou now took the vacant station against the crown batteries with the frigates; nobly attempting, with that inadequate force, a service, in which three sail of the line had been directed to assist: the station of the *Elephant*, to which lord Nelson had shifted his flag from the *St. George*, was in the centre, opposite to the Danish commodore Fischer, who commanded a sixty-two gun ship called the *Dannebrog*. The action commenced soon after ten o'clock: before half-past eleven, it became general; and at one, when few, if any, of the enemy's ships had ceased to fire, the *Isis*, *Monarch*, and *Bellona* had received very serious injury; while the division of the commander-in-chief was unable, for want of wind, to render them any assistance: being, however, near enough to know the unfavorable accidents which had weakened the squadron, and fearful of the event when he saw the enemy's fire unslackened after three hours' engagement, he determined to make a signal of recall; though urged to delay it till communication could be made with Nelson; but in his opinion the danger was too pressing: he was aware of the consequence to his own personal reputation; but he thought it would be cowardly in him to leave Nelson to bear the whole shame of the failure, if shame it should be deemed. 'Under a mistaken judgment therefore,' says Mr. Southey;⁷ 'but with this disinterested and generous

CHAP.
XLIV.
1801.

⁷ Life of Nelson.

CHAP.
XLIV.
1801.

feeling, he made the signal for retreat.' All the notice Nelson took of it, was to give strict orders that his own signal for close action should be kept flying, and, if necessary, nailed to the mast: then, turning to captain Foley, he said;—'You know I have only one eye; I have a right to be sometimes blind;' and, putting the glass to his blind eye, he exclaimed,—'Really I don't see the signal of recall.' The action continued with unabated fury till about two o'clock, when the greater part of the enemy's line had ceased to fire; some of the lighter ships were adrift; and the carnage on board their vessels, whose crews had been continually re-inforced, was dreadful: it was, however, difficult to take possession of those that struck, because the batteries on shore and on Amak island protected them; and because an irregular fire was kept up from the ships themselves, as often as they were fresh manned: in this manner the Dannebrog, although she had struck her flag and her commander had deserted her, renewed her fire, till she was silenced and burnt; while nearly every man in the praams, ahead and astern of her, was killed. By half-past two the action had ceased along that part of the line which was astern of the Elephant; and Nelson, seeing the manner in which his boats were fired on when they went to take possession of the prizes, declared that this irregular proceeding must be stopped, or a fireship sent to burn them: at this time, half the shots from the Danish batteries struck the surrendered ships, and the returning fire of the English was still more fatal to the poor devoted Danes. The admiral, humane as brave, was inexpressibly shocked at this massacre; and, with his own peculiar presence of mind, retired into the stern gallery, to write a letter to the crown prince, saying 'that he had been commanded to spare Denmark when she no longer resisted; that her line of defence had struck to the British flag; and that if the fire were continued, he must be obliged to destroy all the floating batteries which he had taken, without having the power of saving their brave defenders, who were the brothers, and ought not to be

the enemies, of Englishmen.' When this letter was folded up, a wafer was given to Nelson in the hurry of the moment; but he instantly ordered a candle to be brought up from the cockpit; and having applied wax to the paper, affixed a larger seal to it than usual; observing, 'This is no time to appear hurried and informal.' The dispatch was immediately conveyed ashore through the contending fleets by captain sir Frederick Thesiger, who found the crown prince near the Sally-port, animating his people at the batteries, and sharing their dangers. During his absence, Nelson, having consulted with captains Freemantle and Foley, decided that the best thing which could be done, was to remove the fleet out of the intricate channel from which it had to retreat. In somewhat more than half an hour, the Danish adjutant-general Lindholm came, bearing a flag of truce; on which the batteries ceased to fire, and the action closed after four hours' continuance. As he came with an inquiry from the prince respecting the object of Nelson's note, the British admiral wrote, in reply, 'that his object was that of humanity: he therefore was willing that the action should cease, and the wounded Danes be taken on shore; the prizes being burned or carried off, as he, lord Nelson, should think fit:' he added, 'that he should consider this the greatest victory he had ever gained, if it should be the cause of a happy reconciliation between his own prince and the king of Denmark.' Sir F. Thesiger was dispatched a second time with the reply; and the Danish adjutant-general was referred to the commander-in-chief for a conference on this overture. Lindholm, assenting to the proposal, proceeded to the London, about four miles distant; and Nelson, taking advantage of the critical moment, made signals for his leading ships to weigh in succession: they had the shoal to clear; they were dreadfully crippled; and their course lay under the Trekroner battery.

The Monarch led the way in a most shattered condition, with twenty-six shot between wind and water, and 210 men killed or wounded: she touched on a

CHAP.
XLIV.

1801.

shoal, but was pushed off by the Ganges, which struck her on the broadside, as she rounded-to; while the *Defiance* and *Elephant*, as well as the *Désirée* frigate, grounded at about a mile's distance from the *Trekroner*, and remained fixed for many hours: as Nelson left the *Elephant* to follow *Lindholm*, he observed, 'I have fought contrary to orders, and shall perhaps be hanged; but never mind.' It was speedily agreed that there should be a suspension of hostilities for twenty-four hours; that all the prizes should be surrendered; and that the wounded Danes should be carried ashore; for no surgeons had been provided on board, and the mutilated wretches were bleeding to death for want of assistance. The boats of sir Hyde's division were employed all night in getting our ships afloat and bringing out the prizes, which consisted of six line-of-battle ships and eight praams; but only one, the *Holstein* of sixty-four guns, ever reached the shores of England; the rest were sunk with all their guns aboard.

The battle of Copenhagen was, by lord Nelson's own account, the most dreadful he had ever witnessed. Captain Riou, who particularly distinguished himself, was cut in two by a raking shot from the crown batteries, which he had so gallantly opposed: this occurred when the *Amazon's* stern was opposed to the batteries, whilst he was, with heavy heart, obeying sir Hyde Parker's signal for drawing off his frigates, and just after his observation—'What will Nelson think of us?' Captain Mosse, the commander of the *Monarch*, also fell nobly in action; and the total loss of the British, in killed and wounded, exceeded one thousand; while that of the Danes, including prisoners, was not less than six.

Nelson, having landed the day after the battle, had an interview with the crown prince, for the purpose of arranging preliminaries; and, at the repast which followed, with all the sincerity of his character, bore witness to the valor of his foes. The negotiations lasted five days; and on the ninth, he landed again; when a difficulty arose respecting the duration of the

armistice. The Danish commissioners fairly stated their fears of Russia; and Nelson frankly told them that his reason for demanding a long term was, that he might have time to act against the Russian fleet, and then return to Copenhagen: neither party would yield on this point, and one of the Danes hinted at the renewal of hostilities; on which Nelson spiritedly exclaimed,—‘Tell him we are ready at a moment; ready to bombard this very night!’ the conference, however, proceeded amicably, though the commissioners could not come to an agreement, and left the admiral to settle it himself with the prince, who consented to an armistice of fourteen weeks. For this great victory, achieved under circumstances of difficulty and danger, greater than were ever before encountered by a British fleet, Nelson was raised to the rank of viscount; an inadequate reward, as his biographer justly states, for services so splendid, and of such paramount importance to the interests of England: it seemed, however, as if the members of our government were actually ashamed of this victory; so unjust were they toward those who had nobly gained it; nor is there any thing in the dispatches of Nelson more remarkable than his indignant complaints that he and his gallant captains had not, as after other great battles, been rewarded with medals; and that the corporation of London (meanly subservient to the will of the higher powers) had withheld its thanks from those who had fought at Copenhagen.

It was now intended to act against the Russians, before the breaking up of the frost should enable them to leave Revel; but sir Hyde Parker, having heard that the Swedes had put to sea, to effect a junction with their allies, altered his course, in hopes of intercepting that part of the confederated force. On the nineteenth, the Swedish fleet was discovered; but, on perceiving the English, it retired, and took shelter behind the batteries of Carlsrona. Sir Hyde lost no time in acquainting the governor with the armistice that had been concluded between Great Britain and Denmark; and called on the Swedish government to

CHAP.
XLIV.
1801.

Dissolu-
tion of
northern
confede-
racy.

CHAP.
XLIV.

1801.

renounce the northern confederacy: in the mean time, news was received of the assassination of Paul, and the accession of his son Alexander; when instructions were sent from our government to sir Hyde Parker, for suspending operations against Russia until the new emperor's views should become known; and also for renewing friendly relations with Sweden, provided her monarch should relinquish all hostile engagements entered into against Great Britain. On the fifth of May dispatches arrived appointing lord Nelson successor to sir Hyde Parker as commander-in-chief; who instantly took the most energetic measures for ascertaining the views and policy of these northern courts: Alexander, however, began his reign by abolishing the injurious innovations of his predecessor, and ordering all British sailors in confinement to be conveyed to the ports where their ships were stationed. Hostilities now ceased on all sides: lord St. Helens was afterwards sent to St. Petersburg, as minister plenipotentiary; and, on the seventeenth of June, a convention was concluded between Russia and Great Britain, and which afterwards comprehended Sweden and Denmark, recognising the principle contended for by this country; while such restrictive regulations were imposed on the right of search, as might prevent any unwarrantable exercise of it on neutral vessels.

Affairs of
Portugal.

The attachment of Portugal to its ancient ally now excited the attention of the French ruler, who induced the king of Spain to declare war against that country in March: a counter-declaration from the court of Lisbon, worthy of the best days of its monarchy, was issued on the twenty-first of April, accompanied by preparations for defence: but the Spanish army, having entered the Alentejo, and advanced to the Tagus, almost without opposition, a treaty was signed at Badajos on the sixth of June, consigning the province of Olivenza to Spain, and shutting the Portuguese ports against English vessels. The French government, however, refused to concur in this arrangement, unless certain places in Portugal were occupied by its troops; and general St. Cyr, advancing at the head of

24,000 men, invested the fortress of Almeida, within thirty leagues of the capital. The court was now alarmed; and a British subsidy of £300,000 having been unaccompanied by troops, contrary to its original intention, a treaty was signed at Madrid on the twenty-ninth of September, on terms highly favorable to France. During this contest our ministry, fearing lest the island of Madeira should be given up to the enemy, sent thither a squadron with a small body of land forces, who took possession of the forts commanding the bay of Funchal.

CHAP.
XLIV.
1801.

The troops, destined against Egypt in the preceding year, were now re-embarked, and sent to Marmorica, on the coast of Caramania, under an expectation of deriving assistance from the Turks: in this respect, however, they were totally disappointed; while the other disadvantages under which they labored were such as have seldom been experienced by men in a similar situation: they knew little or nothing of the region which they were ordered to attack; they possessed but one map, and that very incorrect; they had no guide but sir Sidney Smith, who was unacquainted with the interior of the country; and they were so ill-informed of the state of the enemy's force, that they estimated it only at 10,000 French and 5000 auxiliaries; when in reality it amounted, including natives, to more than 35,000, habituated to the climate, inured to danger, and elated with success. Our forces under sir Ralph Abercrombie did not much exceed 12,000 effective men; yet, notwithstanding this disparity, and so many other discouraging circumstances, he determined to make an attempt, at least, to dislodge the enemy from Egypt. Aboukir-bay was the place chosen for disembarkation; and on the eighth of March the first division landed, in face of a large body of French, advantageously posted on sand-hills forming the concave segment of a circle, and under a heavy fire of grape-shot from artillery, as well as the cannon of Aboukir castle. Although the front of the landing-place was narrow, and commanded by a steep hill, on which the French had taken a position apparently

Expedition
to Egypt.

CHAP.
XLIV.

1801.

inaccessible, the troops, when they leaped on the beach, formed in line, as if they had been at a review: then advancing with the true British weapon, the bayonet, they forced the enemy to retire with a loss of 300 men, eight pieces of artillery, and a considerable number of horses: the boats immediately returned for the remainder of our forces; and by the zealous exertions of the navy, all were landed before night. On the twelfth they moved forwards, and came within sight of the enemy, advantageously posted on a ridge between the canal of Alexandria and the sea.

The British proceeded to the attack next day, marching in two lines, by the left, with an intention of turning the right flank of their opponents: this design, however, was anticipated by the French commander; who, descending from the heights, attacked the leading brigades of both lines, which were consequently obliged to change their position: this was not done without considerable loss; for, though the English had an advantage in numbers, since only one division of the French was engaged, they suffered severely from their inferiority in cavalry and artillery: their commander therefore did not think it prudent to persist in his intention of forcing the heights, but ordered the army back to the position which it occupied in the morning; where it sustained and repelled the memorable attack of the twenty-first of March. The preceding evening, sir Sidney Smith received a letter from an Arab chief, apprising him of Menou's arrival at Alexandria, and of his intention to fall on the English with his whole force next day; but the commander-in-chief, unacquainted with the character of these Arabian tribes, did not give due credit to the friendly communication; neither has general Menou, though the disposition of his forces was excellently arranged, escaped severe criticism for his precipitancy. With all the advantages of position, and the city of Alexandria in his rear, his part was to act defensively; since our general, from his situation, must soon have become the assailant, or have abandoned his enterprise; in which latter case, the English might have

been attacked with the greatest possible advantage during their re-embarkation: the French commander, however, by rash movements, freed his antagonist from the necessity of making any hazardous attempt on his camp. The action commenced in the morning, before daylight, by a feigned attack on the British left, in which the French were repulsed; but their most vigorous efforts were directed against the right of our army; and the assault was made with incredible impetuosity: they had turned our right flank; and the twenty-eighth regiment, which bore the first brunt of the engagement, with difficulty maintained its position, though assisted by the fifty-eighth and the twenty-third: the enemy's numbers were dreadfully superior; and our army was on the point of giving way, when the brave forty-second rushed to support their fellow-soldiers, and became engaged with the French Invincibles, whom they completely vanquished, and took their standard:⁸ but as they were pursuing their victory, a body of cavalry, coming round, charged them in rear, while a fresh column marched up in front. Their colonel, Alexander Stewart, made every disposition possible under such fearful circumstances; and the brave highlanders were engaged at once in front, flank, and rear; with infantry and cavalry: even when broken, they continued individually to resist; and the conduct of each man exalted the renown of his regiment. The contest was extremely obstinate; but the French were ultimately thrown into confusion: a column of infantry attempted to penetrate our centre, but with no better success: a corps of light troops, supported both by infantry and cavalry, also advanced to keep in check the left, which was the weakest part of our line; but all efforts were vain: victory declared in favor of the English, who remained masters of the field, with a loss of nearly 2000 men killed, wounded, and missing; while that of their adversaries was computed at double the number. But the triumph of our troops was dearly purchased

⁸ It was lost again, and retaken by Anthony Lutz, a private in the regiment of Minorca.

CHAP.
XLIV.

1801.

by the loss of their general, who received his mortal wound, by a musket ball, in the thigh; though he concealed it from the army till the period for exertion was past: his strength then failing him, he was carried from the field on board the admiral's ship, where he died on the twenty-eighth of March, universally lamented for his great and good qualities both of head and heart.

The command of the British army now devolved on general Hutchinson, who ably perfected the work which his gallant predecessor had commenced: the situation to which he succeeded was arduous; for though the French were defeated, they were still very powerful both at Alexandria and Cairo; and the whole of Egypt was in their possession. The new commander lost no time in advancing towards Alexandria, where the enemy's principal force was concentrated; and in order to facilitate the blockade, by debarring his army from all communication with the interior, the famous canal was cut, the water of the sea was let into the lake Mareotis, and the capital turned into an island: in the mean time, the town and castle of Rosetta were taken by a division under colonel Spencer, aided by a body of Turks; the garrison offering but a feeble resistance, and retiring across the Nile: the English and Turkish forces now attacked and defeated the French near Ramamieh, which commanded the entrance of the Delta; and on the following day this place surrendered. Hutchinson then proceeded to the reduction of Cairo, in preference to undertaking the siege of Alexandria; and, about the middle of June reached the capital of Egypt: the capitan pasha posted himself at Gizeh, on the opposite side of the Nile; and the grand vizir took a position within cannon-shot of the city. Cairo being thus completely invested, general Belliard, who commanded the garrison, was offered the most honorable terms of capitulation, in order to prevent a needless effusion of blood: these at first were peremptorily refused; though Belliard had no serious intention of defending such extensive fortifications, with the in-

habitants wholly hostile to him, and his troops desirous of returning to Europe: after a negotiation, therefore, of several days, terms of surrender were signed; by virtue of which, his forces, with all private property belonging to officers and men, were to be conveyed by the allied powers to the nearest French ports on the Mediterranean; but Menou, who commanded in Alexandria, was left at liberty to avail himself of this convention or not, as he pleased. While such transactions were going on in Egypt, general Baird landed at Cossire on the Red Sea, with a force of 7500 men from India; and, advancing across the desert, arrived on the thirtieth of June at Ghinnah; whence he proceeded to Lower Egypt, to assist in its reduction.

The convention of Cairo not being accepted by Menou, the combined English and Turkish armies, on the seventeenth of August, commenced the siege of Alexandria, which was defended by 312 pieces of cannon: the approaches were made with skill and courage by the besiegers, who drove the enemy from post to post; till the French commander, finding no prospect of relief, and no hopes of ultimate success from resistance, agreed to surrender, on the conditions accepted by general Belliard. Thus, with a very inferior force, did the British army wrest an important country from our enemies, and restore it to an ally: the effusion of so much blood, and the expenditure of so much money in this expedition, might form a subject for lamentation, when we recollect that the French evacuated Egypt on nearly the same conditions as had been stipulated at El Arisch; but it must be recollected that the terms of that convention would have transferred their army from Egypt to Italy, at a time when it might have proceeded instantly to act against our allies: but when Menou capitulated, Austria had concluded a treaty with France, and the return of the French troops to Europe was no longer a matter of importance.

Consequences more serious resulted from the inconsiderate permission granted by general Hutchinson to Menou, to despatch a swift-sailing vessel for the pur-

CHAP.
XLIV.

1801.

pose of apprising his government of the capitulation; by which means intelligence of the final conquest of Egypt reached Paris before it was known by our cabinet: from the knowledge thus acquired, the first consul derived great advantages in a treaty of peace, which he hastily concluded with the Porte; holding out the evacuation of Egypt to the Turkish ambassador, who was ignorant of the fact, as a consideration for privileges highly advantageous to French interests.

Early information, however, of this capitulation was still more desirable for the British ministers on account of the pacific negotiations in which they were then engaged; for had it been known to them in proper time, there can be but little doubt that they would have insisted on terms more favorable than those actually obtained. It remains to be observed, that the honor of planning and carrying on this Egyptian expedition belongs exclusively to lord Melville; who strenuously promoted it, notwithstanding the irresolution of Pitt, and the reluctance of the king: many superb remains of ancient art had been collected by the French for transportation to the halls of the Louvre, and among them the celebrated Rosetta stone, which led to the interpretation of hieroglyphical language: these enduring trophies, having been very reluctantly surrendered at the capitulation of Alexandria, now adorn our national museum.

Menaces of
invasion.

While the possession of Egypt was uncertain, the French ruler determined to direct all his efforts against the only enemy yet unsubdued by his arms or arts: accordingly immense masses of troops were assembled on the northern coasts of France; whose ports, as well as those of Holland and Belgium, were filled with armed vessels; and deeds about to be performed by the heroes of Marengo and Hohenlinden against the British isles, were continually vaunted in proclamations and manifestos: but though Napoleon affected to consider England as a nation of shopkeepers, and her sons as rendered effeminate by commercial wealth, a spirit of patriotic defiance was raised against his menaces from one end of the realm to the other; and

it was calculated, that at this period, the armed force of Great Britain by sea and land, besides innumerable volunteers, consisted of nearly 500,000 men. Our brave seamen, in the mean time, did not suffer the French flotilla destined for the invasion of our shores to lie idle in port: a squadron was prepared to act in the channel; and as public opinion required an officer to command it who possessed the full confidence of the nation, Nelson was at length deemed worthy of a chief command, from Orfordness to Beachy Head: but it was a sense of duty alone, as his best biographer observes, which induced him to accept of this commission; for its nature and details were new and disagreeable to him; and his health was unequal to the labor it required: yet his zeal, abilities, and energy were unabated; and he had the satisfaction to know, that so long as the defence of his native coasts remained in his hands, not even a single boat was captured by the enemy.¹⁰ On the second of August, lord Nelson, having hoisted his flag, as vice-admiral of the blue, on board the *Medusa*, proceeded with two sail of the line, two frigates, and several smaller craft, to Boulogne, where an immense number of armed vessels, and lugger-rigged flats, called praams, were assembled: perceiving twenty-four of these anchored in a line before the harbor, he ordered the bomb-vessels to weigh; and these threw their shells with such effect, that within a few hours, three of the brigs and flats were sunk, and six driven ashore. Being of opinion, that the remainder might be captured by the boats of his squadron, he sent them against the enemy on the night of the fifteenth of August, in five divisions: that commanded by the gallant captain Parker commenced the attack with undaunted courage, but an unforeseen obstacle baffled all his exertions; a very strong netting was traced up to the lower yards of the French vessels, which were fastened with chains, not only to each other, but to the ground: and so invulnerable was the foe, when thus defended, that captain Parker's crew were repelled with great slaughter; he

¹⁰ Dispatches, vol. iv. Introd. p. vi.

CHAP.
XLIV.

1801.

himself receiving a mortal wound, while several other boats were sunk or taken. But the exertions of our naval heroes were not confined to the narrow limits of the Channel: in March, admiral Duckworth made an easy conquest of several Swedish and Danish settlements; which were restored to those powers, in virtue of the treaty of St. Petersburg: the islands of St. Martin and Eustatius were reduced; while in the East, the Batavian settlement of Ternate, the principal of the Molucca islands, surrendered to a small squadron under captain Haynes.

Sir James Saumarez was blockading the port of Cadiz, when he received intelligence that three French line-of-battle ships and a frigate were lying at anchor in the road of Algesiras, under cover of batteries on shore; and he determined immediately to attack them with six sail of the line: but a change of wind taking place, just when a considerable impression was made on the flag-ship of admiral Linois by captain Stirling in the *Pompée*, and the *Hannibal* taking ground under a battery, while her commander, captain Ferris, was executing a bold manœuvre, sir James was induced to retire, with a loss of more than 360 men in killed and wounded. This disappointment however only stimulated our seamen for another contest: the ships were repaired with all possible expedition; and when the French, joined by a Spanish squadron, were sailing toward Cadiz, the rear of the united fleet was attacked, during the night of the twelfth of July, in a very dexterous and gallant manner.

But since the action which ensued has drawn forth some dishonorable reflections on our navy, from a writer whose eminence as an historian is only to be equalled by his rancor as a politician, it is fortunate that we are enabled to rebut such an accusation by the testimony of surviving officers, men of undoubted integrity, who would scorn to obtain fame by acts unworthy of British seamen. The following graphic description of the battle by one of these,¹¹ may serve

¹¹ From a letter on this subject, addressed to the editor of the *Times* newspaper, of September 25, 1845, by B. F. Outram, M.D., F.R.S., inspector of her

as the best refutation of M. Thiers' statement, who asserts that the Spanish first-rates, Carlos and Her-menegildo, were destroyed by red-hot shot, fired from the Superb, and heated by furnaces sent on board for that purpose. "The Superb arrived at Gibraltar, from a cruise, in high health and discipline, a few days after the battle of Algesiras, when the Hannibal grounded under the enemy's batteries, and our other disabled ships were towed back to the mole, with great labor and difficulty from the wind failing them.¹² The exertions to refit these crippled vessels were, I believe, never surpassed; but they were far from being ready for service, when on Sunday afternoon, July 12th, the combined French and Spanish fleet, plainly in sight of our squadron, was perceived preparing to weigh anchor: then all was bustle and animation in the whole garrison and population of Gibraltar; and the rock was covered with anxious gazers. The force of the enemy more than doubled ours, being two of 112 guns, seven of 74, (not reckoning the Hannibal, which they failed to get out) and four frigates. We had only four of 74 guns, and one frigate; for the Pompey was obliged to remain in harbor: nevertheless our intrepid admiral determined to attack them in the night; ordering captain Keats to annoy their rear after dark; and adding, that he would follow with the other ships as soon as possible. At sunset, after long manœuvring to weather Cabrita Point, the enemy bore up for Cadiz; and at half-past eight o'clock the Superb made all sail in chase.

At 11 P. M. I had reported every thing ready in my department, and was walking the deck with the captain, when we came up with a large ship on our larboard bow, which proved to be the Carlos; and another, the

majesty's fleets and hospitals. 'At this glorious period,' says Dr. Outram, 'I had the good fortune to be surgeon of that noble ship the Superb; and being one of her very few surviving officers and crew, I solemnly pledge my word of honor, that there were no means of heating balls in any of our men-of-war; that every spark of fire was put out early in the day; and that the late distinguished sir R. Keats, our captain, would have scorned to employ any combustible missile, or any other mode of warfare than the fair old English way of fighting, with warm hearts and cold iron.'—See also a letter on this subject in the Appendix.

¹² Here also, says Dr. Outram, M. Thiers is in error. The Pompey suffered indeed severely, but never struck her colors, as he is pleased to assert.

CHAP.
XLIV.

1801.

Hermenegildo, was soon seen a little ahead of her, both unaware of our stealthy approach, and probably too conscious of superiority to fear attack. This was a moment of intense interest: the wind blew strongly from the east (a black Levanter); it was nearly midnight and dark as Erebus; our lanterns were concealed in match-tubs, and our other lights shaded; while those of the enemy flashed brightly from their port-holes and cabin-windows.

When nearly abreast of the Carlos, captain Keats said, 'Now Doctor, below;' and before I could reach my quarters, the most astounding broadside was poured into her, and repeated again and again before she returned a shot; so intirely was she taken by surprise: at last she began firing on both sides, mistaking her consort for another enemy. The effect of our thunder was terrific: away went her foretopmast; the sail fell over her bow guns; their flashes caught the canvass; and, her rigging having been newly tarred, the fire flew to her mast-head with the rapidity of lightning; and she was in flames fore and aft.

All was now horror and dismay on her deck: the Hermenegildo was close to her; and in utter confusion they fell aboard each other: their yards locked inseparably, and in a few moments this second formidable vessel was also in a blaze. Their sad fate now became too evident: the Superb therefore ceased firing, and passed ahead to avoid the fatal conflagration; for already some sparks had come into a port on her lower deck, by which two cartridges exploded, wounding lieutenant Waller desperately, and several sailors more or less severely: according to my general orders, on the first alarm I called out for the magazine door to be shut; but when vivid blue flashes came, one after another, down the cockpit hatchway, I thought our fate was sealed also: but happily the deck was wet, and the evil extended no further.

From my pandemonium below I now ran on deck to catch a momentary breath of air, and a glance of the sublime but appalling spectacle: the red glare

illuminating sea and sky, the impetuous roar of the raging flames, and the shrieks and agonizing gestures of the despairing Spaniards can never be effaced from my memory. It seemed extraordinary that the adverse squadron, still so superior to us in strength, did not put about at any risk, and try to rescue the hapless crews of these burning ships; but as it continued its course, our obvious duty was to follow it. Accordingly the Superb overtook and engaged the St. Antoine, a French line-of-battle ship of equal force; which, after an honorable defence, surrendered just as the admiral in the Cæsar, and captain Hood in the Venerable, came up. The latter, being the fastest sailor, at daylight near Cadiz, brought to action the gallant Linois in Le Formidable, but with no other result except a mutually severe mauling; these brave adversaries parting by consent, with both their ensigns flying.

As the Superb had suffered damage in the engagement, we necessarily lay to, not only to repair it, but to take possession of and man the captured French ship; and while we were thus employed, a large boat came along side, with two officers and thirty-nine of the ghastly Spanish sailors; wet, nearly naked, panic-struck, and speechless: at noon next day we passed the melancholy wrecks of their ships, blown into fragments by the explosion of the magazines—the only relics of two ‘wooden worlds,’ which the day before floated proudly on the ocean, peopled with 2400 men; all of whom perished alas! except the comparatively few whom we had the happiness to save. In the evening we arrived at Gibraltar with our prize in company, under the command of our brave first lieutenant, the late rear-admiral Jackson, and were welcomed by the garrison with the warmest enthusiasm.”

For this action, which was characterised in the house of lords, by Nelson and St. Vincent, as having surpassed all which they had ever seen or heard of, sir James Saumarez received the thanks of parliament, with a pension of £1200 per annum. Admiral Linois discouraged by the event, accelerated his retreat before the British force.

CHAP.
XLIV.

1801.
Treaty of
Amiens.

In the mean time, an active intercourse was carried on between the two hostile governments, whose subjects had become heartily desirous of peace. The negotiation, managed in London by lord Hawkesbury and M. Otto, continued during the summer; but in its progress many impediments arose, as well as some curious discussions concerning the liberty of the press; to the attacks of which Bonaparte was extremely sensitive: being apprehensive lest it should be employed to expose his own character and views, he was very anxious to restrain its powers; little knowing the difficulty, or rather impossibility, of such an attempt in Great Britain. At length, the cabinet of Paris, having received certain information of Menou's capitulation, hastened negotiations; and on the first of October, when the French were threatening an invasion, and the English making great defensive preparations, preliminaries of peace were signed; and the intelligence appeared to diffuse general satisfaction throughout both nations.

The great objects which the former administration had professed to seek, were security to Great Britain, restitution of territory to her allies, and independence to Europe; but the separate treaties of those allies, and the preponderating power of France on the continent, had so narrowed the question, that England had very little to regard beyond the first of these points: this was considered as sufficiently established by her great naval successes, her commercial prosperity, and her vast colonial possessions in both hemispheres. She had proved herself superior to the whole world combined against her on the ocean; while every attempt to disturb her rights, to invade her dominions, or to impair the sources of her commercial and political greatness, had hitherto recoiled on its authors: it was therefore not thought necessary to insist on retaining all our acquisitions; and we agreed to restore them, with the exception of Trinidad, and the Dutch possessions in Ceylon. The Cape of Good Hope was to be given back to the Batavian republic, as a free port; and the island of Malta to its Order, under the pro-

tection of some other European power: the Porte was to be preserved in its integrity; and France to recognise the republic of the Seven Islands. In order to bring this treaty to a speedy conclusion, lord Cornwallis was despatched to Amiens; where Joseph Bonaparte, the first consul's brother, was deputed to meet him as minister plenipotentiary: in the course of discussion, so many difficulties were started, and so many fresh demands preferred on the part of France, that for some time the renewal of war seemed not improbable: on the twenty-fifth of March, however, matters were finally arranged, and the definitive treaty was signed, differing from the preliminaries only in the following points:—a part of Portuguese Guiana was given up to France by a new adjustment of boundaries: with regard to Malta, no class of English or French knights was allowed; and the independence of that island was placed under the guarantee of France, Great Britain, Austria, Spain, Russia, and Prussia; its port being rendered free to all nations: it was also agreed that the prince of Orange should receive compensation for his loss of property and power.

Thus ended the first act of the revolutionary war, though most persons thought the whole concluded; fancying that the chief ruler of France would find his real interests in the preservation of peace; and relying on the repeated declaration of regret, that the two first nations of the world should waste their resources and blood in enmity. Some persons however took a different view of the subject, seeing neither 'indemnity for the past, nor security for the future,' in the restitution of all our colonial conquests, and in the recognition of that gigantic plan of continental sovereignty, which had been conceived by the first founders of the French republic, and pursued with unremitting diligence by its successive rulers.

The opinion of this peace, and of those concerned with it, entertained by the king, was thus expressed by him to lord Malmsbury, in an interview at Windsor:—'Do you know,' said his majesty, 'what I call

General
reflections.

CHAP.
XLIV.

1801.

the peace?—an *experimental peace*; for it is nothing else. I am sure *you* think so, and perhaps do not give it so *gentle* a name: but it was *unavoidable*. I was abandoned by every body, allies and *all*: I have acted, as I conscientiously believe, for the best, because I could not do otherwise; but had I found more opinions like mine, better might have been done.' The real sentiments of Mr. Pitt, on this subject, may be learned from the following conversation held by the same distinguished nobleman with the ex-minister during a ride in Hyde-park:—' Mr. Pitt joined me, and began immediately on the peace. He owned that he had, when the preliminaries were signed, thought that Bonaparte had satisfied his insatiable ambition, and would rest contented with the power and reputation he had acquired; for a moment, therefore, he was disposed to believe that he had become more moderate, and more reasonable; that, having so completely gained every object of his wishes, he would remain quiet, and consider a restoration of peace and tranquillity as a wise and salutary measure, not only for France, but for his own high situation and the preservation of his popularity; but, however, all which had passed since went to show that he had been in error; and that the electing himself president of the Italian republic, the attainment of Louisiana, the two Floridas, and the island of Elba, left no doubt that he was, and ever would remain, the same rapacious plunderer, with as little good faith as he had formerly found him; and that, in consequence, he (Mr. Pitt) was obliged to return to his former opinion, that no compact or covenant made with him could be secure: still he did not regret having spoken in favor of the peace—it had become a *necessary* measure; and rest for England, however short, was desirable: the duration of it would depend on ourselves, and on the conduct we might adopt: except the positive and real situation of the country, which was one of peace, every thing should bear the aspect of war; we should appear warlike in all our provincial, all our diplomatic measures; and above all,

warlike in our military and naval establishments; so that it might be evident to Bonaparte that England will submit to no insult or injury.' I asked him to define insults and injuries. 'Acts,' said he, 'which may affect, either immediately or in their consequences the dignity, honor, safety, or real greatness of the country.' He explained further, by saying,—'the torpid and disgraceful state of public spirit in all the great European courts puts it, I fear, out of our means to prevent Bonaparte's attempts at encroachment, or aggrandisement on the continent: for unassisted as we probably shall be by those courts which he is trampling on, it will not, from the nature of our force and insular position, be practicable for us to hinder him: but any attempt on his part to attack or molest our commercial or colonial interests, made directly on our rights and possessions, (and he illustrated this position by supposing an usurpation of Holland, as of the Cisalpine republic, and an attack on Spanish America,) would, in his mind, call on us for *immediate resistance*, and be not only a justification, but an indispensable cause for war: the being prepared for this would prevent it, and we should take care to make Bonaparte see we were prepared by *every act of our government*. If ministers did this, as he trusted, and was assured they must, there was only a shade of difference between his opinion and the opinions of those who had formerly been his colleagues, and whom he should ever consider as his friends. They still had the same object in view—to watch and counteract the overweening ambition of Bonaparte: they differed; and the question was, which was the best way of doing so: whether by carrying on a war which would weary out the patience of this country, and dwindle away its resources, without making any important impression on the enemy; or by relieving it from the state of warfare in which it had been so many years, renew all its resources under the quiet of peace; and by being in such a state of defence and preparation as could in the shortest period enable us to produce a force equal to repel any insult, and resist

CHAP.
XLIV.
1801.

CHAP.
XLIV.

1801.

any act of aggression or hostility. He then enlarged on our pecuniary resources, and said, with confidence, that a very few years would be fully sufficient to enable England to go on (if provoked to it) with many years of war; and it was not indulging an unlikely hope, that during this period some one of the great continental powers might awake to a due sense of its honor and interests; also, that in a future contest we might derive from some part of Europe, at least, that aid and co-operation which it was out of the question to look for at this moment.' This, says lord Malmsbury, was by far the best, indeed the only good, apology for the peace I have as yet heard, if it can be so called; for it breathed war as much as any of Wyndham's speeches. How nearly the sentiments of Mr. Addington himself coincided with those of Pitt on this subject, may be learnt from what his lordship notes in his diary, April 12:—'In a short conversation which I had this day with Mr. Addington, I found his exultation on the prosperous state of the country in point of finance very great; but with respect to the advantages of peace less than before; and the whole bent of his language went to the necessity of a strong and powerful peace establishment.'¹³

Before we conclude this chapter, the great alteration which took place in the internal state of our own country, during the preceding contest, requires a brief notice; though an elaborate examination of the causes which led to it belongs rather to statistics than to general history. At the commencement of that contest, the population of Great Britain, though not very accurately determined, was computed to be about 10,000,000; at the end it had increased to 11,000,000: during the intervening period, the amount of taxes was £281,644,493; and as government spent the enormous sum of £469,260,938, the difference between those sums, or £187,616,445, was borrowed, and generally at a very high rate of interest. At the beginning of the war, the productive power of the country had risen to a very considerable height; and a spirit

¹³ See Diaries and Correspondence, vol. iv. pp. 63, 64, 70.

of improvement, pervading every class of producers, appeared in the increased produce of the soil, drawn forth by a new system of cropping in rotation, and in a vast extension of all branches of manufactures through the application of ingenious machinery. These causes enabled British laborers to produce annually about £5,000,000 sterling more than at the end of the American war; which additional sum went to increase the fund which constituted wages: for the profits of the capitalist at each period were about the same, while taxes, tithes, and rent were nearly stationary; so that all the advantages arising from the increase in productive labor were enjoyed by the laborers themselves; and if, while profit, rent, &c. continued stationary, the productive power had still gone on, as it afterwards did, a period of great prosperity would have opened to the laborious classes. But affairs soon took a different turn: immense loans were contracted, which raised the rate of profit on all capital employed in the country: taxes were increased to a vast extent: alterations in the value of the currency first lowered the real amount of rent, but afterwards raised it to a baneful height; while other minor circumstances contributed to take away from the productive classes all the benefits which they had for some time enjoyed, through their increased powers of production. In consequence of this state of things, the use and consumption of many necessities of life decreased, and the demand for them declined; until numbers of those, who had been employed in producing them, gave over their labors, and became secondary producers in the capacity of servants, &c., enlisted as soldiers and sailors, or engaged in other trades: and this transfer of labor caused for a time great derangement in the affairs of individuals, as may be seen by an inspection of the bankruptcy lists in the early part of the war, compared with the period immediately preceding it.

Notwithstanding this derangement, the system of loans which was adopted, and the peculiar state of the country, especially in the manufacturing districts,

CHAP.
XLIV.

1801.

where a large introduction of machinery had taken place, procured for ministers a general sanction of the war. The vast absorption of money by government, and the unproductive manner in which it was expended, rendered capital comparatively scarce, and profit high; and this high profit was obtained by capitalists, not only on the wealth lent to government, but on all the capital used throughout the country: this of course affected that employed on land; and the rise in produce and rent which soon took place, gave to the proprietors and occupiers of the soil a full compensation for that portion of the war taxes which they paid; and the prosperity of this class of persons, which raised also that of the clergy, who were connected with them by the tithe system, was soon visible in the increased quantity of land brought into culture.

Nothing enabled the laboring part of the population to bear up against their burdens but the increase in their numbers, and the augmentation of their productive power, through the use of machinery:¹⁴ these causes, however, operated more in checking the fall which would otherwise have taken place in the wages of manufacturers; for agricultural improvements were not so great and rapid as to counteract proportionally the rise of profit on the capital employed in agriculture; consequently the wages of the farming laborers declined; and larger sums, required for the relief of the poor in almost every parish, gave evidence of their deteriorated condition. Such were some of the general results of the first stage of this war; favorable to capitalists in all parts of the country, as well as to members of the stock exchange; although the increase of poor-houses and jails might have showed them that something was 'rotten in the state:' these however were their days of triumph; and the most industrious and productive people on the earth were doomed to bring into existence a vast abundance of all things necessary for the support and solace of man; while others carried off the produce of their toil, and con-

¹⁴ This was more particularly the case in the cotton manufacture.

ed them to a miserable portion doled out in the
of charity. One of the most difficult problems
political economy still remains, unfortunately, to be
ed—how to ensure an adequate compensation to the
of the working classes: yet, until this be done,
can we expect stability for our institutions?

CHAP.
XLIV.

1801.

CHAPTER XLV.

GEORGE III. (CONTINUED.)—1801.

Opening of the imperial parliament—King's speech—Debate on the address—Bonaparte's plans—Arrears of the civil list—Ministry affairs relating to the prince of Wales—Conduct of Pitt toward the ministry—Financial scheme—Army and navy—&c.—Alteration made in the sinking fund—Mr. Abbot clerk of the house of commons—Honors paid to Mr. Pitt—Debate on the definitive treaty—Motions relative to the trade—Militia act—Parliamentary rewards—French expedition to St. Domingo—Naval mutiny at Bantry-bay—Bonaparte's extension of his power and influence on the continent—Confirmation of his authority at home—*Concordat*—Institution of the legion of honor—Attractions of his capital—The French reoccupied Guadaloupe, but fail at St. Domingo—Elections in Great Britain—Doubts in the public mind respecting peace, &c.—Change in the sentiments of political parties—Meeting of parliament—King's speech; and address carried—Debates on the supply of military force, &c.—Increasing dissension between the two governments—Trial and execution of colonel Despard—Opening of parliament—King's speech, and address—Debates—Offer of a coalition made to Mr. Pitt, and rejected—Russian mediation offered without success—Ultimatum proposed to the French government—Lord Whitworth leaves Paris—Seizure of French ships in British ports, and retaliation by Bonaparte—French message to parliament announcing war—Declaration of war—Division in both houses—Address carried by a large majority—Motion of censure on ministers negatived—Subjects of national defence, finance, supplies, &c.—War declared against Holland—Militia bill—Army of reserve—*Levy en masse*—The measure motioned—Volunteers—French preparations for the invasion of England—Act to relieve catholics—Lord Ellenborough's act—Catholic bill—Motion of thanks, &c. to the volunteer corps—Speech closes—Speech from the throne—Correspondence between the prince of Wales and his majesty—Irish insurrection—Execution of Emmett and other traitors—Movements and preparations of the French in consequence of hostilities being renewed—Successes of Great Britain.

CHAP.
XLV.

1801.

Opening of
parliament.

THE imperial parliament was opened on the twentieth of October by the king in person; who, having declared his satisfaction at the convention made with the northern powers, by which the essential rights for which we contended were secured, proceeded to state that preliminaries of peace also had been ratified between himself and the French republic; and he trusted that this important arrangement, whilst it manifested the justice and moderation of his views, would also be found conducive to the substantial interests of this country, and honorable to the British character: the proposal of an address, thanking his majesty for the approaches that had been made toward a pacification, gave to Mr. Pitt an opportunity of expressing his opinions. 'Whatever hopes,' he said, 'might have been entertained by him at different periods of the war, he now thought peace was desirable, since the confederacy, which he had strenuously supported, was dissolved; and he was more anxious about the general complexion of the peace, as affecting the character of this country for honor and generosity, than about any particular acquisition or specific object.' He was not, indeed, quite contented with the preliminaries; though he confessed that ministers would not have been justified in rejecting them, if such rejection had protracted the war: to the principle which actuated them in the selection of acquisitions to be retained, he gave his hearty approbation; they were such as tended most to augment our maritime strength and colonial security; and though he might wish that we had more firmly insisted on retaining the Cape of Good Hope, yet he thought the complete possession of Ceylon was better suited to the safety of our East Indian possessions: in the West Indies, Trinidad was wisely reserved, being preferable to Martinique, not only in point of intrinsic value, but as a protection to our Leeward islands, and with a view to any future operations against Spanish possessions in South America: as regarded Malta, it was right to place it under the protection of a third power, in order to avoid jealousy. He then referred to the interests

CHAP.
XLV.
1801.

of our allies, and the manner in which we had successfully interposed for them; and, in answer to those who said, 'that we had obtained nothing to balance the extended power of France,' he observed, 'that if we had retained all our conquests, the difference would not have been very considerable in point of security; all would have been insignificant as a counterpoise to the enormous influence of France on the continent.' It must have been very mortifying to the friends of this war minister and leader of coalitions, to hear him confess, 'that we could not expect an enemy so powerful as France had rendered herself, to resign every thing which contributed to superiority, and voluntarily fall to that level which Britain could not enforce with all her exertions.' Accordingly, Mr. Wyndham, while he declared his intire disapprobation of the treaty, professed himself 'to be a solitary mourner in the midst of public rejoicings:' even Sheridan could not agree that the conditions were glorious and honorable. 'It was,' in his opinion, 'a peace of which every one was glad, but no one proud.' Fox however declared, 'that as he had, during every year of hostilities, persisted in opposing them, no one could expect him to declaim against the peace, unless its terms had been much more disadvantageous than they really were: he exulted in the opportunity of speaking and voting on a treaty, to which, if the term honorable had been applied, he should not have disputed its applicability: that it was glorious, he would not indeed maintain; for no peace could deserve to be so called, unless it had been preceded by a glorious war.' After commenting on our cessions and acquisitions, he observed, that a better peace might have been procured many years before; but as that opportunity had been lost, he would not repine at the present treaty: the state of the continent had been justly called unsatisfactory; but our safety, he thought, was now equal to what it would have been, if our coalitions had restored the house of Bourbon; a house noted for its ingratitude; *whose success would be followed by an alliance of all the sovereigns of Europe against every*

people which might be oppressed by any one them: to him it was a recommendation of the peace, that the zealous promoters of the war had failed in that great object of their wishes.

CHAP.
XLV.
1801.

When the preliminary articles were discussed on occasion of the address in the house of peers, they were reprobated by the Grenville party, as more disgraceful and injurious to our real interests than a prolongation of the war could have been; but they were defended by the duke of Bedford, the earls Moira, Westmoreland, and St. Vincent, as well as by lord Nelson, and the lord chancellor: the latter thought that the war had been carried on until any further proceeding in it was hopeless; though the direct object for which it was undertaken had been gained, viz., that of repressing the principles and practices of those who had combined for the overthrow of the British constitution. There were some, he said, who thought it behoved us to persevere until the ancient monarchy of France should be restored: but, without inquiring how far that was a desirable object, he would ask how far, and by what means, it was practicable: it could be attempted only through a great coalition of European powers; and such a coalition, when it existed, had been able to do nothing. On a division, the address was carried by a majority of one hundred and fourteen against ten. The convention with Russia gave rise to another debate in the house of lords, when lord Eldon answered the attack made on that measure by lord Grenville, at considerable length. His speech contained some important reasonings on the right of belligerents to search neutral vessels; and he summed up the result of the convention by stating, 'that Great Britain had gained the great objects for which she contended—that free bottoms did not make free goods—that ships of war had the right of search—that the blockade of ports should be recognised as legitimate—that the exercise of these rights should be regulated on clear, intelligible, and liberal rules—and, what was of more consequence than all, that any casual violation of them should not be a

CHAP. XLV. cause of quarrel, but a subject of amicable adjustment.

1801.
Plans of Bonaparte. During negotiations, Bonaparte had been sedulously employed in reorganising the government of France, and prosecuting plans for his ultimate assumption of despotic power. On Christmas eve, 1800, the explosion of what was termed the infernal machine took place; and Napoleon, though it was a plot of the royalists, seized on that opportunity of sending a very considerable number of jacobins into exile; but his grand scheme to support the machinery necessary for holding together and moving the body politic, was the re-establishment of the Roman catholic religion: for this purpose he had spared the pope; and in September, 1801, was ratified a *concordat*, or agreement with the sovereign pontiff, which gave new and essential immunities to the Gallican church; leaving the nomination of prelates to the head of the French government.

Parliamentary proceedings.

In the British parliament, soon after its Christmas recess, the chancellor of the exchequer called attention to our civil list; and, on the report of a committee of inquiry, it appeared, notwithstanding all promises, to be again deeply in arrear; a debt of no less than £990,000 having been contracted since the time of Mr. Burke's celebrated reform bill. During the long and animated discussion to which this affair gave rise, lord Holland in one house, and Fox in the other, expressed their opinion, that a portion of the civil list ought to be set aside for a sinking fund to pay the king's debts; as in the case of the prince of Wales. One novel head of expenditure, under the title of 'occasional payments,' which was considered a clumsy disguise for 'corrupt influence,' excited very severe animadversion: but the whole sum was voted by the house; though the minister allowed that measures ought to be taken for preventing any such accumulation in future: it was, at the same time, wished by many persons of all parties, that the heir apparent should be enabled, through the liberality of parliament, to resume an establishment suitable to his birth

and dignity: in order to give a spur to this question, a motion was made by Mr. Manners Sutton, solicitor-general to his royal highness, for a committee to inquire into arrears due to the prince of Wales from the duchy of Cornwall, during his minority: Mr. Addington's objection, however, to entertain such a discussion induced the prince's legal advisers to recommend the presentation of a petition of rights to the lord chancellor, by which a legal decision on his claim might be obtained.¹⁵ In this stage, the business was cut short by the minister; who, on the fifteenth of February, delivered a message from his majesty, recommending the house of commons to take the affairs of his royal highness into consideration: accordingly, it was proposed that the prince should have £125,000 a year, beside the revenue of the duchy; and this, without disturbing the plan of 1795 for the payment of his debts; of which, it was stated, £563,895 had been discharged up to the fifth of January this year; while the portion still unpaid amounted to £235,754. The prince intimated his acquiescence in this plan; observing, that, with respect to the duchy of Cornwall, he had resolved, from a sense of duty to his father, to forego his claim, rather than prosecute it in a hostile manner: he however added, that till the remaining demands on his honor and justice were satisfied, he must defer the resumption of his state and dignity.

The part which Pitt now took in parliament, on public questions, was that of an independent representative of the people, unconnected with any poli-

¹⁵ 'The duchy of Cornwall,' says Mr. Nicholls, in his Recollections, 'was the prince's property from the hour of his birth: when he came of age, he was put into possession of its revenue; but he obtained no part of that revenue which had accrued during his minority. A different treatment was shown to the duke of York: when he came of age, the whole revenue recovered from the bishopric of Osnaburg during his minority, was paid over to him. The king also procured an act of parliament, authorising him to grant leases of the prince's lands in Cornwall for ninety-nine years, determinable on lives; and for these leases the king received, during the prince's minority, to the amount, I believe, of £250,000. Parliament had no right to grant this power: it was a gross breach of faith in the body which is the guardian of the prince's estates, as much as it is of the demesnes of the crown. I am aware that the prince brought a suit against the king, by petition, and in 1803 received £220,000 for compromising his claims; a sum shamefully inadequate: but how different would have been his situation, if he had received even this sum when he came of age, instead of receiving it in 1803?' A tolerably strong argument this, for the necessity of a reform in parliament!

CHAP.
XLV.

1802.

tical faction. Ministers however were, on various occasions, indebted to his advice more than to his vote; and an eminent historian has observed, that 'had the premier continued to pay to it that attention which it so richly deserved; had he not formed a false estimate of his own power, influence, and resources; had he not imputed to positive desert that strength which arose from a combination of fortuitous circumstances; his political career might have been greatly protracted, and his last days might have been passed remote from the turmoils of office and the bustle of a court.'¹⁶

The chancellor of the exchequer gave early notice of his intention to repeal the tax on income, acknowledging its grievous burden; and confessing that, as a war tax, it ought to cease with the occasion which had given it birth. On the fifth of April he brought forward his plan of finance: and as the income-tax had been mortgaged by his predecessor for the sum of £56,445,000, three per cents, he was obliged to make provision for this deficiency: by the imposition therefore of additional duties on beer, malt, and hops, together with an increase in the assessed taxes, and a tax on exports and imports, he reckoned on raising the sum of £4,000,000; which would also compensate for a deficiency in some of the taxes imposed during the war.

As many persons, with Mr. Wyndham at their head, regarded the present peace only as a hollow truce, and alleged that it would be very dangerous to disarm the country whilst an ambitious upstart existed, whose element seemed to be a state of war; and as this party imputed to the present administration such imbecility as rendered them unfit to conduct the affairs of government, the minister did not disregard their suggestions; but proposed that a much larger force should be retained during the remainder of the year, than had usually been allowed in time of peace: 95,000 soldiers therefore for Great Britain, Ireland, and the colonies, with 75,000 seamen and

¹⁶ See Gifford's Life of Pitt.

marines, were not thought too many under existing circumstances. These high demands and other exigences swelled the supplies beyond £40,000,000, exclusive of the interest of the national debt; and among the means of procuring that sum, a loan of £23,000,000 was deemed necessary: but as the unparalleled augmentation of our debt excited strong doubts respecting its ultimate repayment, the minister endeavored to allay, if he could not wholly remove, public apprehension; holding out strong hopes, delusive enough as the event has proved, of its extinction within forty-three years: for this purpose some alterations were made in Mr. Pitt's acts respecting the sinking fund. The last, or new fund, for liquidating the debt contracted since 1786, had become much larger than that originally appointed for the redemption of the old debt: the present minister proposed to consolidate and perpetuate both, till the whole debt, old and new, should be redeemed: this, including the loan for the present year, amounted to about £540,000,000; the annual interest of which demanded more than £17,000,000.

CHAP.
XLV.
1802.

Sir John Mitford, speaker of the commons, having vacated his chair, by accepting the office of lord chancellor of Ireland, Charles Abbot, Esq., an eminent barrister, and very intimately acquainted with the forms of the house, was chosen to succeed him. Many were the attacks made by Mr. Whitbread, sir Francis Burdett, Mr. Nicholls, and others, on the character and administration of the late minister, who was strenuously defended by his friends: a motion, proposed by sir Harry Mildmay, for a vote of express thanks to Mr. Pitt, was carried in the commons by 211 votes against 52; and sir Robert Peel strongly expressed his opinion that the house ought to bestow on the ex-minister some more solid mark of approbation than a vote of thanks: no doubt, if Mr. Pitt had been so inclined, he might have put his hand deep into the national purse by means of his satellites; but the mind of that statesman was differently constituted, and soared far above sordid considerations of gain: he

CHAP.
XLV.

1802.

was more gratified by a festival, held on the twenty-eighth of May, at Merchant Tailors' hall, in commemoration of his birth; and attended by an immense concourse of personages eminent in rank, station, and talent.

Debates on
definitive
treaty.

On the thirteenth of May, came on the grand debate relative to the definite treaty of peace; when it was attacked and defended with more than ordinary zeal and ability. Its opponents in the upper house were headed by lord Grenville, who made our cession of Malta the principal subject of attack; ridiculing the absurdity of placing that island under the guarantee of six powers, who could not be expected to agree on any one point relating to it: and, as to restoring it to the knights of St. John, that was still more absurd; for how could such an order be said to exist when almost all their funds had been confiscated? enough was not left to repair the fortifications or maintain the security of the island, which would necessarily come under the influence, and into the pay of France. In adverting to other parts of the treaty, he observed, that our sovereignty in India had not been recognised; while the Cape of Good Hope, a station most important to the maintenance of that sovereignty, had been given up; and, in the Mediterranean, we had sacrificed, not only Malta, but Minorca, and even the little isle of Elba, which France desired, for the purpose of excluding us from the port of Leghorn: he concluded a severe investigation by moving an address to his majesty, acknowledging his royal prerogative to make peace and war; but declaring that the house could not view, without alarm, the conclusion of this present treaty, for which sacrifices had been made by us without any corresponding concessions on the part of France; that in the moment of peace that country had exhibited proofs of the most dangerous ambition; that these considerations imposed on our government the necessity of adopting precautionary measures; and that while the house relied on his majesty's wisdom to be watchful of the power of France, they assured him of a ready and firm

support in resisting any encroachment on British rights. The treaty was also censured by the duke of Rutland, earl Darnley, and lord Carnarvon; but it was defended by lords Auckland, Pelham, and Hobart, the lord chancellor, the earls of Westmoreland, Rosslyn, and Mulgrave; and lord Grenville's motion was negatived.

CHAP.
XLV.
1802.

In the lower house, the definitive treaty was attacked in all its parts by Mr. Wyndham, who moved an address similar to that of lord Grenville, but in language breathing a spirit of still higher dissatisfaction. 'It is impossible,' he said, 'to have seen, without great anxiety and alarm, the unexampled circumstances that have attended the final conclusion of the present peace; the extensive and important sacrifices, which, without any corresponding concession, this treaty has added to those already made by the preliminary articles; the unlooked-for and immense accession of territory, influence, and power which it has tacitly confirmed to France; the numerous subjects of clashing interest and unavoidable dispute which it has left intirely unadjusted; and, above all, those continued and systematic projects of aggrandisement, of which, in the very moment of peace, we have seen, unhappily, such undeniable and convincing evidence.' This proposition was, of course, negatived; but it disclosed to ministers the grounds of a very formidable opposition.

The cession of Trinidad to England, and the plan of its more general cultivation by negro slaves, alarmed the friends of abolition; and, early in the session, Mr. Canning moved the house on this subject. His first was a preliminary motion, relating to the cultivation of the soil in that island, which would require, on the old system, an immense increase of its slave population, strongly militating against an ultimate abolition of the traffic, which was the purport of an address to the throne in 1797: in the course of his speech, Mr. Canning observed, that, although he did not mean then to discuss the slave-trade question, he would just remark, 'that, as often as it had been

CHAP.
XLV.

1802.

debated, he had never heard any one attempt to maintain the position, that if such a trade did not now exist, it ought to be instituted.' This brought on his legs the magnanimous member for Liverpool, general Gascoigne; who had the hardihood to maintain, in the face of the world, 'that if the slave-trade never had existed, yet, in consideration of its beneficial consequences to this country, it ought now to be commenced.'

Mr. Canning's second motion on the same subject was introduced by a speech, remarkable as indicating to ministers his dissatisfaction with their general policy, and as disclosing some large and liberal views, equally founded on justice and humanity: in 'considering the acquisition of Trinidad,' he observed, 'it seems as if Providence had determined to submit to trial our boast of speculative benevolence and intended humanity, by placing in our power a colony, where, if we pursue our old course, it must be purely for its own sake, without the old inducements or the usual apologies: this,' said he, 'is a day of tests; I trust we shall all abide the trial.' The motion, however, was lost by the previous question being carried.

An important act was passed this session for consolidating the existing militia laws, and for augmenting that species of force. The sum of £10,500 was voted to Dr. Jenner, for the promulgation of his valuable discovery of vaccine inoculation, by which it was hoped the small-pox would ultimately be extirpated: this, however, is hardly to be expected, until parliament, in its wisdom, shall pass an act to enforce the operation, or to prevent inoculation. A reward of £1200 was given to Mr. Henry Greathead, for his invention of the life-boat; and £5000 to Dr. Carmichael Smith, for a discovery of nitrous fumigation to prevent the progress of infectious disorders. On the twenty-ninth of June, parliament was dissolved by proclamation.

Prepara-
tions for
hostility.

The French government, having determined on attempting to recover St. Domingo and Guadaloupe from their revolted negroes, had sent a strong military

and naval force for that purpose, under general le Clerc, which put to sea on the fourteenth of December last year. Admiral Mitchell, who was then stationed at Bantray-bay, with seven sail of the line, was ordered to follow and observe their motions; but when it was known whither they were destined, a mutiny broke out in several of the vessels; which, however, was soon suppressed; and the squadron proceeded to the West Indies to reinforce the protecting fleets on that station.

England had strong reason for displeasure, when she saw the interference and intrigues of the first consul in various parts of Europe. In March, a treaty was signed with the Cisalpine republic, of which Bonaparte was appointed president, preparatory to his assuming the iron crown of Charlemagne; and he not only procured the cession of Louisiana, but the duchy of Parma also, from Spain: disputes having arisen respecting the formation of a new constitution in Switzerland, and the mediation of Napoleon being solicited, Ney was sent with 40,000 troops; the diet was dissolved; the Swiss patriots were arrested; and the independence of the country was annihilated by the very power on which it relied for protection. In September, Piedmont was turned into a provincial appendage to France; and in October, the Spanish king annexed to his royal domains all the property of the Maltese knights in his dominions, declaring himself grand master of the Order in Spain: little doubt was entertained of this step having been taken at the suggestion of the French government; and thus the treaty of Amiens was, to a certain degree, vitiated. The court of Rome, which, since the *concordat*, had become devoted to the first consul, gave under all circumstances an example of submission to his wishes: it was the first to recognise the erection of Tuscany into the kingdom of Etruria; as well as the formation of the Helvetic, Cisalpine, and Batavian republics: Prussia soon followed; and she was imitated by the other continental powers.

To confirm his authority at home, Napoleon caused

CHAP.
XLV.

1802.

a proposal to be made in the conservative senate, for prolonging his consulate during life; and this measure being referred to the people, was carried by a vast majority: it was also decided, that he should have the power of nominating his successor. Imposing a new constitution on France, he invested himself with the right of making war or peace, ratifying treaties, granting pardons, nominating public officers, appointing 40 out of 120 members composing the senate, and prescribing to that assembly the subjects of its deliberation: little doubt could have existed even then of his ultimate intention, when he took away all responsibility from ministers, and transferred it to himself: in order to make this clear to the public, the acts of his government were signed only by M. Maret, secretary of state: every department indeed was dependent on his will; the whole being overawed by his army, and controlled by his police: aware that to the former he was indebted for his elevation, he now instituted the grand military order, intitled the legion of honor; to be composed of fifteen cohorts, and a council of administration; each cohort to consist of seven grand officers, twenty commandants, thirty subordinate officers, and 350 legionaries; the first consul always to be its chief, and the members to be appointed for life, with appropriate salaries: nor could any institution have been more gratifying to a nation like that which Napoleon now ruled. Neither did the first consul spare any exertion to render his capital attractive: the statue of the Venus de' Medici, taken from the grand duke of Tuscany, was now added to the decorations of the Louvre; his parties at the Tuilleries were numerous and brilliant; as also were the reviews of his superb troops: an immense number of foreigners flocked to Paris; the theatres were crowded, and the fêtes magnificent; every where an air of prosperity was visible; and Bonaparte proudly claimed to be regarded as its author.

In the West Indies the French recovered Guadeloupe, after a sanguinary resistance; and were at first successful in St. Domingo; Toussaint L'Ouverture

having submitted under promise of pardon: scarcely however had he signed the capitulation, when he was seized on a vague charge of conspiracy, conveyed to France, and cruelly immured in prison, where he soon afterwards expired: but the negro generals, Dessalines and Christophe, who had also surrendered, justly fearing a similar fate, saved themselves by flight: the insurgents again rose up in arms; the climate aided their efforts; and le Clerc fell a victim to its malignity. General Rochambeau succeeded him; and the conflict recommenced with increased fury; but the natives recovered possession of the whole island, except a few maritime towns, which were with difficulty maintained: the success of St. Domingo had infused a spirit of resistance generally among the oppressed people of the colonies; so that insurrections broke out both at Tobago and Dominica, the latter of which at one time assumed a serious aspect: as the conspiracy originated in a regularly trained black regiment, this circumstance augmented that aversion to an arming of the negroes, which already prevailed in the islands.

CHAP.
XLV.

1802.

In our elections for a new parliament popular excitement prevailed to a considerable extent: the corresponding societies had generated a spirit of dissatisfaction which reached the manufacturing towns, where many atrocities took place, and revolutionary principles were openly promulgated. In the election for Westminster, popular fury was carried to a great height; when Mr. Fox and admiral Gardner were returned after a severe contest: the rage of party however particularly distinguished itself in Middlesex, where sir Francis Burdett opposed Mr. Mainwaring, and was received with vehement acclamations by the mob, whose imaginations were exalted with the idea of their own sovereignty. In consequence of the non-arrival of the French ambassador, people began to doubt the permanency of peace: it was not till the thirtieth of April that lord Whitworth obtained his final audience, and departed for Paris; general Andreossi being appointed by Bonaparte to the British embassy; though he did not arrive till the tenth of

CHAP.
XLV.

1802.

November following: even his presence did not dissipate forebodings in the public mind, which was increased by the intelligence that Bonaparte had interdicted all English newspapers: the pretext assigned for this was, lest the skirmishing of journalists should create disunion, and lead to a rupture: the true cause lay behind; lest the real character of Napoleon's projects should be made known to the world.¹⁷

During this interval of peace a considerable change took place in the relative positions and bearings of parties toward each other in England. As it had already been observed, Mr. Pitt lent his sanction to the present government;¹⁸ while several of those who had made common cause in resigning with him strenuously opposed it: but although ministers were thwarted by many former adherents, they were only in high favor with the king, but were supported by some whig members, whose opposition had previously been most violent: among these was Sheridan whose biographer labors to convince us that a change of sentiment arose from the patriotic desire of excluding Pitt from power by strengthening the hands of those that were in possession of it.¹⁹ The truth however seems to lie nearer the surface, in the needy circumstances of that dissolute character; who, having been long debarred from the treasury offices, and now seeing an avenue open to them, not only gave to ministers 'the aid of his own name and eloquence, but endeavored to impress the same views on Fox, exerted his influence to procure the sanction of Carlisle house in their favor.'

Meeting of
new parliament.

With such dispositions parliament assembled on

¹⁷ 'Publicity,' says Bourrienne, 'either by words or writing, was Bonaparte's horror: hence his aversion to public speakers and writers.'

¹⁸ During the whole time of his retirement from office, however, till his return to the reins of government, a correspondence among his powerful friends took place, who entered into a confederacy for thwarting the present administration, bringing back Mr. Pitt to office: among these the principals were the duke of York, lord Malmsbury, lord Eldon, and George Canning; the latter of whom was the great go-between; ready at this time to take up any job that was imposed upon him, or to defend the most flagrant abuses in government. Not much is due to the credit of Pitt himself that he was fully apprised of all these efforts of his friends.—See Lord Malmsbury's Diaries, &c., vol. iv.

¹⁹ Moore's Life of Sheridan, vol. ii. p. 311.

sixteenth of November; when his majesty, in adverting to the extraordinary situation of continental affairs, hinted at the irregular advances made by France in power and influence. Encroachments of this kind, while they were at variance with the spirit of the late treaty, threatened the general interests of Europe, and therefore could not be viewed with apathy: vigilance on our part was peculiarly necessary; and it seemed highly expedient that this country should be prepared to meet every contingency. Lord Arden, who moved a responsive address in the peers, increased the general opinion that dissention was at work between the two governments: he thought that the house could not but approve his majesty's resolution to direct the observation of government to the great changes among continental powers; nor did he suppose that the supplies which vigilant preparations required, would be refused. Lord Nelson also, who seconded him, commended the resolution taken by government to maintain our national dignity without losing sight of the advantages of peace: he deplored war, as the bane of commercial and social intercourse; but nations must continue to support their honor, as a necessary part of their establishment. War, he thought, had not impaired our resources; and we ought not to fall into dishonor for the value of any sacrifices: he apprehended war, and there were just grounds for that apprehension; since the ink was scarcely dry with which the treaty of Amiens was signed, when France began to violate it, by adding territory to territory: all the ambition of France was not noticed by England as it ought: war had long assumed in that country a preparative front; and no one could suppose that it would stop short at the command of the first consul, whose interest it was to encourage it, and bring Great Britain into a condition similar to that of Switzerland, Piedmont, and other states. The address was carried without a division: that in the commons was proposed by colonel Trench, and seconded by the honorable Mr. Curzon; both of whom agreed, that ministers would duly

CHAP.
XLV.

1802.

regard the welfare of the country, and not permit its character to be injured by tamely submitting to the encroachments of France.

Canning and Wyndham, though they did not absolutely recommend immediate war, strongly urged the necessity of counteracting the schemes of Bonaparte's insatiate ambition: Fox however hoped that ministers would not be influenced by the intemperate zeal of such politicians, to rush into a new contest without urgent necessity. As Mr. Wyndham, in the warmth of feeling which the subject excited, had affirmed that the country was 'rapidly rolling on from ruin to ruin,' the first lord of the treasury repelled this offensive remark by an appeal to the high rank which Great Britain held among the nations of the world; the respectable force which she continued to maintain; the magnitude of her resources; the increase of her revenue; and the flourishing state of her arts and manufactures. He condemned that rage for war, which seemed to spread among those who wished to be considered as the only true friends of their country; and he could not believe that dreadful havoc and multiplied calamities were necessary to maintain the dignity of human nature: as war was a certain evil, peace was a certain good; though he confessed that it might be impolitic to purchase even this blessing by a sacrifice of national honor: he thought it his duty to be prepared for every contingency; and while he deprecated the melancholy recurrence of war, he would not invite it by inglorious timidity. The address was finally carried without a division.

The state of the country, in point of defensive preparation, was warmly debated, when the supplies for another year were demanded. The proposal of 50,000 seamen, though it had been previously hinted that 30,000 would be sufficient, was considered by the war party as a proof of alarm recently excited in the cabinet: an augmentation also of our military force was deemed requisite; 128,000 men being voted in that department. During the debates on this subject, Sheridan delivered one of his most brilliant speeches:

though sufficiently severe on the Pitt administration, he declared that the time had arrived, when it was absolutely necessary for this country to adopt vigorous measures of defence. After a humorous description of the discord which prevailed in our cabinet during the negotiations at Lille, when ministers acted, not merely like men in a boat rowing different ways, but like men in the boat of a balloon, the honorable gentleman concluded his speech in the following burst of eloquence:—

CHAP.
XLV.
1802.

‘On this subject I have dwelt more particularly, because I wish Bonaparte not to mistake the cause of the people’s joy: he should know that if he commits any act of aggression against them, they are ready to enter singly into the contest, rather than suffer any attack on their honor and independence. I shall proceed no farther: I perfectly agree with my honorable friend,²⁰ that war ought to be avoided; though he does not agree with me on the means best calculated to produce that effect. From any opinion which he may express, I never differ but with the greatest reluctance: for him my affection, esteem, and attachment are unbounded; and they will end only with my life: but I think an important lesson is to be learned from the arrogance of Bonaparte. He says he is an instrument in the hands of Providence; an envoy of God: he says he is an instrument in the hands of Providence to restore Switzerland to happiness, and elevate Italy to splendor and importance. Sir, I think he is an instrument in the hands of Providence, to make the English love their constitution better; to cling to it with more fondness; to hang round it with truer tenderness. Every man feels, when he returns from France, that he is coming from a dungeon, to enjoy the light and life of British independence: whatever abuses exist, we shall look with pride and pleasure on the substantial blessings we still enjoy. I believe also that he is an instrument in the hands of Providence, to make us more liberal in our political differences, and to render us determined, with one

Patriotic
speech of
Mr. Sheridan.

²⁰ Mr. Fox.

CHAP.
XLV.

1802.

hand and heart, to oppose any aggression that may be made on us: if that aggression be made, my honorable friend will, I am sure, agree with me, that we ought to meet it with a spirit worthy of these islands; that we ought to meet it with a conviction of the truth of this assertion,—that the country, which has achieved such greatness, has no retreat in littleness; that, if we should be content to abandon every thing, we should find no safety in poverty—no security in abject submission; finally, that we ought to meet it with a firm determination to perish in the same grave with the honor and independence of our country.'

Mr. Canning, while he applauded the patriotism of the last speaker, entered into a long and labored defence of Mr. Pitt; declaring, 'without disguise or reservation, that he thought this a time when the administration of government ought to be in the ablest and fittest hands: those in which it was then placed did not, in his opinion, answer to that description; nor did he pretend to conceal in what quarter that fitness most eminently resided.' With regard, however, to insinuations thrown out respecting Mr. Pitt's guidance of the present cabinet, it was not for him to speak; but a distinct and peremptory disavowal was required; and he trusted that his majesty's ministers would not suffer the night to pass over without disclaiming unequivocally any secret influence, which he was sure had been, without any grounds, alleged: he gave his vote in favor of the increased force, as he did on occasion of voting an additional number of seamen; though he arraigned, in no very measured terms, the imbecility of the present administration. Mr. Fox was satisfied with a small military establishment; because a large standing army was not necessary to protect this country against invasion, the danger of which might be met by a respectable naval armament; and he advised ministers to attend more to the means of allaying disorders in Ireland, and of reducing the national debt, than to affairs of the continent.

As the advocates for war acquired greater influence over ministers, objects of complaint were studiously

brought forward; so that disputes between the two governments soon became warm and acrimonious: the English cabinet declared that one nation could not safely adhere to the letter of a treaty, if the other violated its spirit and substance; while the official partisans of Bonaparte, denying our right of interference in his political arrangements, exacted from us a strict observance of all stipulations. The first remonstrance made against the unjustifiable encroachments of the first consul, related to his conduct toward the Swiss; and his Britannic majesty endeavored at the same time to ascertain the sentiments of the courts of Austria and Russia on this point; but he found, to his great regret, that neither of them manifested any disposition to counteract the violence and injustice that had been committed: equally fruitless were his expostulations with reference to usurpations in Holland and Italy. It was also alleged that numerous persons were sent to reside in our maritime towns under the pretence of trade, but really with a view to procure such intelligence as might be useful to the French government in the event of a war; and while this scheme was put in practice, the restrictions on British commerce in France were enforced with extraordinary rigor: insults, which deserved only contempt, were also turned into subjects of complaint; like the vaunting declaration, that Great Britain could not contend alone with France: nor did the negotiations of general Sebastiani with the Ottoman Porte, and his survey of the Levant, escape strong animadversion. On the other hand, Napoleon was exasperated by the freedom of British journals, through which the most bitter truths were conveyed to his irritable mind; nor could he make any distinction between the government and the press: he also complained of protection given to discontented emigrants; but chiefly he reprobated our retention of Malta. 'My pretended encroachments,' he said, 'are mere trifles; and even if they were highly important, you have no concern with them: but in refusing to surrender Malta, you are openly violating the treaty of Amiens, which I will

CHAP.
XLV.

1803.

Increasing
dissensions
between
France and
England.

CHAP.
XLV.
1803.

not tamely suffer to be infringed.' At the very time; however, when he was making bitter complaints against our press, a publisher of the name of Peltier, who conducted a journal in the French language, called *L'Ambigu*, was sent before a jury for libels against him; and the pure stream of British justice itself was in some degree polluted, in order to insure his conviction:¹ another demand, however, that the Bourbons and their partisans should be expelled from England, met with a firm and generous refusal. In the mean time, Napoleon ordered his political agents throughout Europe to circulate outrageous libels against the highest characters in Great Britain; and, while he complained of our retention of Malta, he was wholly silent, not only on the change that had taken place in the political relations of those powers which had guaranteed its independence, but on his own intentions of dismembering the Turkish empire, monopolising the commerce of the Levant, and ultimately striking a blow at our Indian possessions. The British ministers, indeed, were to blame for carrying conciliation to a greater length than was compatible with national dignity; since it was easy to perceive that such a system would have no other effect on the arrogant mind of Napoleon than to increase its presumption: chiefly however they were to blame for their imbecile arrangements and acceptance of the treaty of Amiens, which obliged them to collect a number of pretexts, and make up a mass of petty grievances, for want of one large and specific plea. When the first consul demanded why Malta had not been evacuated according to stipulation, the British government replied by a claim to retain that island, because Bonaparte had increased his European territory, and threatened Egypt: the last objection was idle, since no overt act had been committed; the first was not in the bond. Napoleon, whose elevation rested on the basis of national glory, could not yield

¹ The lord chief justice, in his address to a special jury, chiefly composed of mercantile men, observed; 'I trust your verdict will strengthen the relations in which the interests of this country are connected with France.' The renewal of hostilities alone secured the convicted defendant from punishment.

the point of Malta; and to demand it of him, was, in fact, to declare war: his ready answer was, that England should have the benefit of the treaty of Amiens, and no more: to this she could not submit, but at the risk of her independence; and here both her ministry and Pitt were right, though the blunders which the former had made in those negotiations, threw on their country the odium of offending against the letter of treaties, while the spirit of them was in her favor.

CHAP.
XLV.
1803.

In February, this year, a trial took place under a special commission, in consequence of a treasonable conspiracy discovered in the preceding November, for dethroning the king, and compassing his death; it originated with colonel Despard, an officer of courage and ability; who, having been reduced in circumstances through the abolition of an office which he held on the coast of Honduras, had organised a society in London for the subversion of that tyranny which he attributed to the ministers of his sovereign. Of the scheme imparted to his confederates, the proposed objects were the constitutional independence of Great Britain and Ireland; an equalisation and extension of rights; a liberal reward to all who would exert themselves in the cause of the people, and ample provision for the families of those who might fall. The colonel, with twenty-nine laboring men and soldiers, was apprehended at the Oakley Arms in Lambeth, while deliberating on the execution of their criminal design: after a trial which lasted eighteen hours, he was found guilty; but though very honorable testimony was given to his services by lord Nelson, sir Alured Clarke, and others, it was thought dangerous in those peculiar times to pardon so heinous a crime. Nine of his unhappy associates were also convicted; six of whom, together with their leader, were executed on the twenty-first of February, with the usual forms accompanying cases of high treason.

Trial of
colonel
Despard.

On the twenty-third of the same month, parliament was opened by a speech from the throne, in which his majesty observed, that in his intercourse with foreign powers he had been actuated by a

Parliamentary
proceedings.

CHAP.
XLV.

1803.

sincere desire for the maintenance of peace; though he could not lose sight of that wise and established system of policy, by which the interests of other states are connected with our own; nor could he be indifferent to any material changes in their relative condition and strength: he also expressed his conviction that parliament would concur in adopting such means of security, as were best calculated to preserve the blessings of peace. The presage thus intimated was soon afterwards confirmed by a proposal to augment our naval and military forces: on the eighth of March, a message to both houses, represented the preparations made in French and Dutch ports as grounds for defensive arrangements; when lord Hobart moved a responsive address in the lords, in which, though he admitted that such preparations might be intended for the security of distant possessions, he argued, that the existence of discussions, which did not altogether promise a favorable termination, justified immediate and strong precautions: this proposition received the intire approbation of earl Spencer; while lord Moira, though he hoped that hostilities might be prevented by our assuming a formidable attitude, advised, if they should unfortunately occur, that a large army should be assembled between the metropolis and the coast, to dispel the danger of invasion. In the lower house, many members, among whom were some zealous advocates of war, expressed a desire of farther information, before the ministerial recommendations were attended to: Fox, in particular, wished to know the precise reasons for putting the nation into a warlike attitude: he still thought war might be avoided; and that statesman, who, in 1786, proclaimed the natural enmity of England and France as an argument against their commercial intercourse, now asked, 'whether France was for ever to be considered as our rival?' In compliance however with ministerial demands, 10,000 seamen were added to the existing number; and his majesty was authorised to embody the militia, as if an invasion were impending over the country: in the

mean time discussions were continued; but as Napoleon declared that harmony could not be restored unless Malta were surrendered, either to the knights, or to some continental power; and as he also refused to give any security that his territorial encroachments should cease;—it became daily more evident that peace could not be long preserved.

The visible necessity of infusing vigor into the cabinet at this crisis, induced the premier to apply to Mr. Pitt for official support; and it was intimated to him that if he would assume the place of a secretary of state, Mr. Addington would take an equal rank, and leave the nominal premiership to some indifferent person. This arrangement, however, did not suit Pitt's views: he not only required to bring into the cabinet several statesmen, as lord Spencer, lord Grenville, and Mr. Wyndham, who had exhibited a remarkable hostility to the Addington administration, but insisted on all proposals being made to him with the king's previous knowledge and from his direct authority. In fact, he well knew the game which he had to play, and held off so long, that the minister resolved to brave the storm, and to pursue his course, with such strength as he could then command.

Meanwhile, the negotiations with France daily assumed a more hostile character; Bonaparte declaring that he would as soon see the English in possession of one of the suburbs of Paris, as of Malta. The Russian emperor offered mediation between the discordant governments; but as he proposed no scheme of accommodation, his offer was politely evaded; and at length the following terms of an amicable arrangement were suggested by lord Whitworth to the first consul. If a cession, it was said, of Lampedosa could be procured from the king of Naples, it might serve as a naval station for the English in lieu of Malta, which should then be left to the natives on the basis of independence: it was expected however that Holland should be evacuated by French troops, and Switzerland relieved from the same incumbrance: his Britannic majesty would recognise the Spanish

Hostile negotiations.

CHAP. prince who had been made king of Etruria, as
 XLV. -- as the Cisalpine and Ligurian republics; in ret
 1803. for which France was required to indemnify
 king of Sardinia by the cession of some valu
 territory: a secret article also proposed that M
 should remain for ten years under British gov
 ernment before the exchange took place.

This scheme was called an *ultimatum*, and a we
 interval only allowed for a reply: the mode
 adjustment, as might have been supposed, was
 very palatable to the French ruler; but he
 unwilling to begin the contest so soon, inevitabl
 he knew it to be; and in this he was encouraged
 Talleyrand, who is said to have foreseen the pe
 cious consequences even of fresh victories. N
 leon therefore expressed a wish for the continu
 of discussion; but England was now perempt
 after having been tricked and annoyed in a thous
 ways: our ambassador, conscious that he was
 sisting usurpation, and an indefinite system of
 croachment, resolved, in compliance with his inst
 tions, to decline all farther negotiation; and ha
 made preparations for his departure from P
 quitted that capital on the twelfth of May. Or
 were immediately issued for seizing the ships
 France and of the states subject to her power
 British ports; and this measure, which was
 ceived too much in that spirit of usurpation w
 we were so ready to blame in our antagonist, c
 down a severe retaliation; for the first consul
 mediately detained all British subjects who had
 cautiously remained in the French territories;
 the ambassador's departure. Thus recommenced
 twixt the two nations a quarrel unrivalled in
 history of the world for the inveteracy of its sp
 the variety of its fortunes, and the circumstance
 its termination.

War pro-
 claimed
 with
 France.

On the sixteenth of May, the king of Great Bri
 sent a message to the two houses, announcing
 with France; and on the eighteenth, a declara
 from his majesty was laid before them, explaining

line of conduct which he had thought proper to pursue, and the reasons of it: accordingly, on the twenty-third, this subject was taken into deliberation; when the galleries, and the very avenues were crowded to excess. In the peers, the discussion was opened by lord Pelham, who wished that the only subject of consideration should be, whether, from a perusal of all the papers laid on the table, a just and legitimate ground of war had not been established: having given an outline of the conduct of the two governments since the treaty of Amiens, in which he stated all the aggressions of France, and justified the conduct of our ministers where they had been attacked, his lordship concluded by moving an address, expressing the sense entertained by the house of that anxious desire which his majesty had shown for the preservation of peace; their regret that France had not manifested similar principles; their indignation at the spirit of encroachment exhibited by that power; and the reliance which his majesty might place on their assistance. To detail the various speeches made on this occasion, would only be to repeat arguments already known to the reader: it may be sufficient to remark, that the dukes of Clarence and Cumberland strongly supported the address: the former considered the question nothing less, than whether this country should retain its independence, or descend from its high rank, and join those vanquished and enfeebled nations, which had been plundered, insulted, and degraded by France: the latter went over the history of the war, tracing the anxiety and clamor for peace to the failure of so many of our expeditions: it was from perceiving the wishes of the people so strongly setting toward peace, that he gave his consent to the preliminary articles: at that time it was considered a primary object to guarantee the independence of Malta; but the changes made in the order, as well as in the relative situation of France and other states, now rendered it imperative on us to retain it; at least, until that independence could be perfectly secured. Lord Mulgrave thought that the restoration of this island to the Order would

CHAP.
XLV.

1803.

Discussions
on the re-
sumption of
hostilities.

CHAP.
XLV.

1803.

only be a transfer of it to France, by which power it would be kept as a key to Egypt: on this point, indeed, most of the arguments turned; showing clearly the blunders of British diplomacy, which left such a bone of contention between the two parties; enabling the French, though in reality aggressors, to keep the letter of the treaty, while the English were obliged to break it in self-defence.

Lord Stanhope felt so strongly the situation in which England had placed herself, that he considered her bound to give up the island; while lord Melville declared that war ought to be commenced in order to retain it. The dukes of Norfolk and Richmond, as well as the marquis of Lansdowne, were anxious for peace: the first of these noblemen wished for the mediation of Russia; the second did not think ministers would be justified in commencing war, and increasing our national expenditure, on account of Malta; while the last recommended a spirit of pacification in lieu of hostile preparations; and did not think the aggressions of France, as they respected Austria and Switzerland, sufficient pretexts for a contest. Lord King, after expressing his regret that the country was on the eve of war, and asking what she could expect from the conflict, moved as an amendment to the address, that 'those expressions should be altered, which so warmly imputed to France the guilt of breaking treaties:' this was opposed by lord Ellenborough, who considered war a security for our liberty and commerce. Lord Moira, regarding it as a great calamity to the majority of the people, strongly recommended caution: still he could not bear the insults and arrogance of France: her possessions even now were enormous, yet she coveted more; while her ruler aimed at the character of Cæsar or Alexander: it was high time to present a bar to his progress; which no country could do but England: this nation had never been engaged in a war more just than that which was now apprehended; we had already learned much from our enemy, and were conscious that energy, as well as foresight, were

necessary to cope with, and subdue him: earls Spencer and Rosslyn, the marquis of Sligo, and lord Grenville, coincided in these views; and the house having divided on lord King's amendment, there were found only ten votes in its favor, and against it 142.

CHAP.
XLV.
1803.

In the commons, a debate was carried on with extraordinary animation for two days; but so eager was public curiosity, that the strangers' gallery was filled at an early hour, by persons admitted in an unusual manner, to the exclusion of reporters. After some spirited observations from Mr. Erskine, Pitt rose to defend the approaching contest, of the nature and merits of which he took a lucid and extensive view; contending, that through French aggressions, the renewal of hostilities became as much an act of necessity as the original war in 1793: he then expressed his conviction, that some system, far more vigorous than any which had been hitherto adopted, would be found requisite in our financial preparations for national defence: if the enemy expected success, his hopes must be founded, either on breaking the spirit of this country by perpetual menaces against our coasts; or on impairing its resources, and undermining its credit by an expensive and protracted contest: to defeat the first of these purposes, he thought it was not sufficient to make those military and naval preparations which would prevent the success of any particular attempt at invasion; but that such extensive arrangements for national defence should be effected, as might diffuse throughout the nation a sense of security: to meet the second object, that of wearing out our resources, he hoped to see established a system of finance, which contemplated not only the expenses that might be necessary in the first year of the contest, but the possibility of its protraction during as long a period as that which had lately ceased: he was persuaded, that it could only be by providing, at the outset, means adequate to the whole extent of these purposes, that we could secure the best chances of bringing the contest to a speedy conclusion, or prevent the annual recurrence of accumulated embarrassments, and an

CHAP.
XLV.

1803.

expenditure, which might in the end prove intolerable: he trusted, therefore, that ministers would promptly bring both these points under consideration of the house; so that measures might speedily be adopted which would convince France that we had within ourselves means of prosecuting the war as far as it could reasonably be expected to extend: he was aware that such measures could not be effected without extensive personal sacrifices, affecting the convenience, and even the comfort, of many classes: he lamented this as much as any man; and if he could see a prospect of obtaining secure repose by present concession, he would gladly avoid all painful exertions: but under existing circumstances a weak and timid policy would scarcely delay the moment when those exertions would become indispensable for our existence as a nation; and would infallibly expose us to a struggle at no distant period, when we should be taken at a great disadvantage. At the present moment, we could hardly be said to have an option: from the fatality of the times, and the general state of Europe, we must consider our lot as cast by the decrees of Providence in a time of peril and trouble: he trusted however that the temper and courage of our people would be found equal to the duties which such a situation imposed on them; and that they would remember, even in the hour of trial, what abundant reason we had to thank Providence for the distinction we enjoyed over most countries; for the blessings which national wisdom and virtue had hitherto produced; and which it now behoved us to guard and preserve by perseverance in the same just and honorable course.

An amendment was moved by Mr. Grey, who thought that peace should be prized in proportion to the difficulties and distresses of war. Mr. Whitbread wanted unanimity; but asked, 'whether the house could conscientiously vote an address which would involve a direct approbation of the conduct of ministers? Even the right honorable gentleman who spoke before him (Mr. T. Grenville) admitted that they had compromised the honor of their country: he had

reviewed their conduct before and after the treaty of Amiens; and they had no right to declare those to be reasons for war, which were no reasons for preventing the signature of that treaty:’ he concluded by expressing hopes that ministers would take advantage of Russian mediation to preserve the peace. Mr. Canning, in a long and elaborate speech, supported the address: with regard to the justice and necessity of the approaching contest, he thought that ministers ought sooner to have resented the insults and encroachments of France: the importance of Malta had been shown by the conduct of Napoleon himself regarding it; Russia was the only power that could protect Malta, but she had exhibited no inclination to occupy or guarantee it. Mr. Fox took a review of the whole correspondence; contending that there had been much artifice, contrivance, and evasion on both sides: he did not think the first consul’s power colossal; and his threat of invasion he considered as mere boasting: with his system of aggrandisement our country had nothing to do; but he blamed ministers for tacitly bearing insults, and now going to war on sordid principles: he was alarmed at the unusual preparations which were deemed necessary: an ex-minister had threatened us with an additional load of two or three hundred millions to be placed on the national debt, merely to retain Malta. As a last resource to prevent national ruin, he recommended an alliance with Russia; and he intirely approved of the amendment, since no one could support the original address without some qualification. The debate was wound up by this speech, which occupied three hours in the delivery, and was listened to with profound attention, as a splendid effusion of eloquence; containing many great views and sublime sentiments, though deficient in consistent, comprehensive, and advantageous principles of policy: when the house divided, the address was carried by a majority of 398.

It soon appeared that the administration was ill qualified to guide the helm of state in such tempestuous times; and the nation became convinced that

CHAP.
XLV.

1803.

such a knowledge of parliamentary forms and constitutional points as may fit a person to discharge the official duties of speaker to the house of commons, is not a sufficient qualification for a minister of state. The abilities of the premier were again brought under discussion, in consequence of a motion of censure made by colonel Patten, comprising five resolutions: in these, the administration was charged with having deceived the nation, and betrayed its interests, by holding out hopes of continued peace, at the very time when, according to their subsequent declarations, it was known that France was pursuing an unvaried course of aggression, violence, and insult. As a proof of their incapacity and neglect of duty, it was stated, that on the sixteenth of October, 1802, counter-orders were despatched, revoking orders before given for the surrender of the Cape of Good Hope; and that directions, in consequence of which that valuable settlement was actually evacuated, were issued on the sixteenth of November, when the aggressions of France, as ministers themselves avowed, had been manifested for more than six months; that, in directing the final surrender of the Cape under such circumstances, without any previous arrangement or explanations, they had acted most improvidently, and in contradiction to the sense which they had themselves manifested of their own duty. In considering this question, Pitt pursued a middle course, which neither pleased the cabinet nor gratified the war faction: by voting with the mover, he would have condemned the conduct of the administration to which he had promised support; and by openly siding with the court, he would have given favorable testimony to those whom he was disposed to censure for not having boldly resisted the encroachments of France immediately after the ratification of the peace. The parliamentary tact of Canning is not unworthy of notice: he felt himself, on this occasion, for the first time in his life, compelled by an overruling sense of duty to dissent from his right honorable friend: 'but let it not be imagined,' he said, 'that in following a different course

for myself, I presume to insinuate the smallest blame, to hint a doubt of the propriety of that, which, with his view of the subject, he has chosen for himself; and for those who may come, like him, with unpledged opinions to this discussion.' He (Mr. Canning) came with a decided opinion of ministerial incapacity, and a full conviction that the charges contained in the resolutions were true: he asked, 'whether any man could reflect, without indignation, on the delusion which they had so long practised on parliament and the people; or whether any one could recall to mind, without disgust, their canting professions of belief in the continuance of peace and good will between this country and France, uttered in that house almost daily, up to within ten days of the declaration of war?' The proposed resolutions, however, were rejected by a large majority; and Mr. Addington, who had signified his readiness to submit to the will of the house, was encouraged to retain the power which he held with the king's intire approbation: should the war prove successful, that power would probably be prolonged; if disasters should call for his resignation, he was prepared to retire, like the best and the worst of his predecessors, with ample honors and remuneration for public services.

Parliament soon began to occupy itself with subjects of finance, and preparations for national defence: when the military estimates were discussed, an addition of 30,000 men was proposed; and when Mr. Wyndham derided this as insufficient, he was assured by Mr. Yorke, the secretary at war, that a comprehensive and vigorous scheme would soon be submitted to the house. Pitt, however, not satisfied with this assurance, haughtily demanded from ministers a more specific statement of their designs, and a more positive promise of their fulfilment: before any plan was matured, the financial accounts of the year were specified, and supplies demanded to the amount of £33,730,000: the whole, however, granted during the year, exceeded £41,000,000. Beside an increase on the customs and excise duties, the income tax was now renewed, though

CHAP.
XLV.

1803.

not to its former extent; since it was not to exceed five per cent, and to act on every species of income from £150 upwards: a duty, however, was imposed on land of one shilling in the pound, to be paid by the landlord, and ninepence by the tenant: the nett produce of this tax was estimated at £4,700,000; and that of all the war taxes at 12,700,000 annually; but they were to expire at the end of six months after the return of peace.

War with
Holland.

An extension of hostility to the Batavian republic was now declared; though his majesty asserted that he had no wish to involve unoffending nations in those calamities which the French did not seem inclined to avoid: but to his proposal, that French troops should be withdrawn from Holland, and its resources confined to its own peculiar occasions, the first consul would not accede; and war was accordingly denounced against that unfortunate state. The principal feature in the military scheme brought forward by ministers was that of rendering our militia as effective as possible; and a bill for this purpose was brought forward on the twentieth of May: but in consequence of a message from the crown, on the eighteenth of June, recommending more extensive measures, a proposition was carried for embodying a new species of militia, to be denominated the 'army of reserve,' consisting of 50,000 men for England and 10,000 for Ireland, to be raised by ballot, and confined to the defence of the united kingdom; but allowed to volunteer into the regular army; all persons were liable to serve, from the age of eighteen years to that of forty-five, except such as were exempt from the militia ballot, and poor persons having more than one child under the age of ten years. This bill, which received the royal assent on the sixth of July, was only the precursor of a measure gigantic in magnitude, which comprehended the arming and training of our whole effective male population; and which passed into a law on the twenty-seventh of the same month: this general enrolment, called the *levy en masse*, was divided into four distinct classes;

the first embracing all unmarried men between the ages of seventeen and thirty; the second all between thirty and fifty; the third, all married men between seventeen and thirty, not having more than two children under ten years of age; and the fourth all under fifty-five, not comprised in the other descriptions: these different classes, who were to be trained to the use of arms in their several parishes, were liable, in case of invasion, to be called out to co-operate with the regular army within the realm, and to remain embodied until the enemy should be subdued or expelled. In recommending such a measure, Mr. Yorke expressed a wish of living to see the day, when the use of the musket would form part of the education of British youth, as that of the bow did in the time of their ancestors; for this would be the best method to remove all danger of our subjection to a foreign yoke. So vexatious a scheme was not generally acceptable to the nation; nor was the danger which ministers seemed to dread so great as to justify this extraordinary panic: in one of the debates to which it gave rise, Mr. Pitt objected to its compulsory nature; and when a hint was given that the first class of unmarried men might suffice, the remark met with very general approbation.

Preparations were immediately made for the accomplishment of the modified plan, which was greatly facilitated by the incredible number of volunteers who had started up in every part of the realm, exhibiting a force of 400,000 men, ready to defend their native coasts. The French ruler viewed with astonishment this formidable display of national energy; and, though his preparations for invasion were continued, the probability of success must have appeared much diminished to his discerning mind: beside the grand fleet at Brest, supposed to be destined for the Irish coast, an immense flotilla of transports and gun-boats had been built with uncommon expedition in the French ports; and it was hoped that a sufficient number of these vessels, protected by ships of superior force, might effect their passage

CHAP.

XLV.

1803.

Act to
relieve
catholics.

across the channel, and land an army on our coast, which would instantly march forward, and carry the capital by a *coup de main*.

Before the Easter recess, an act was passed to relieve Roman catholics from certain penalties and disabilities, on subscribing the declaration and oath contained in the act of the thirty-first of George III.: an important addition was also made to the criminal law, by a bill introduced into the upper house by lord Ellenborough, to make the maliciously maiming, wounding, and disfiguring of any of his majesty's subjects a capital felony: attempts also to discharge loaded fire-arms, with intent to kill or wound, were subjected to the penalty of death. In the midst of discussions on military affairs, ecclesiastical matters were not overlooked; for a very important act, known as the clergy bill of the forty-third of George III., was now passed, 'to amend the laws relating to spiritual persons holding farms; and for enforcing the residence of such persons on their benefices in England.'² This bill not only regulated the quantity of land which clergymen might cultivate, but exacted residence on their benefices, with particular exceptions and alleviations, during nine months in the year; giving to the bishops a power of granting licenses of non-residence, during two years, under certain conditions; and of assigning a salary to curates suitable to the value of the benefice and the circumstances of the case; an appeal in such licenses being reserved to the archbishops. Some other acts were also passed,³ by which amendments were made in that relating to queen Anne's bounty, and the mortmain act; to encourage the building of churches, chapels, and houses of residence. As Mr. Wyndham had more than once used terms of great asperity and contempt toward the volunteer corps, which he styled 'the depositories of panic;' to remove any supposition that such sentiments were generally entertained, Mr. Sheridan, on the tenth of August, moved that the thanks of the

² The act was extended to Ireland, in stat. 48 George III. c. 66.

³ See Evans's Collection of Statutes relating to the Clergy, p. 127, &c.

house be given to our volunteer and yeomanry associations, for the zeal and promptitude with which they had coalesced for the defence of the nation: he also proposed that returns of the different corps be laid before the house, in order that they might be entered on its journals, and thus handed down to posterity: both these propositions were carried unanimously; and on the twelfth of August the session was closed by a speech from the throne, in which his majesty expressed great satisfaction at the energy and promptitude which had been displayed in providing for the defence of the country, and for the vigorous prosecution of the war; assuring his parliament that economy in the public expenditure should be carried as far as was consistent with exertions necessary to frustrate the enemy's designs. At this interesting period, the prince of Wales addressed a letter to the prime minister, urging the propriety of his being invested with an efficient military rank, and placed in a situation where his example might contribute to excite the loyal energies of the people. In reply to repeated applications on this subject, his royal highness was informed, that should the enemy so far succeed as to effect a landing, he would have an opportunity of showing his zeal at the head of his regiment; but on public grounds, his majesty could never permit the prince of Wales to consider the army as a profession. A more fit and constitutional answer could not have been given: but the prince, in his rejoinder, dwelt with unbecoming jealousy on the military commands enjoyed by his royal brothers; as if the succession to the crown did not greatly outweigh such petty advantages: in a letter to the duke of York, he went so far as to call 'the opportunity of displaying his zeal at the head of his regiment,' with which his father had consoled him, 'a degrading mockery;' although patriotic ardor had been the very motive assigned for his application. The earnest and indignant tone assumed in this correspondence, as well as the dutiful and respectful terms in which the prince made his appeals to the paternal heart, produced a considerable effect on the sympha-

Letter of
the prince
of Wales.

CHAP.
XLV.

1803.

Insurrec-
tions in
Ireland.

thies of the nation; until it was discovered that the whole was the composition of other persons: the petulance however of his character was strongly exhibited in his last letter to Mr. Addington, who had requested him, in consequence of some intelligence, the nature of which was kept secret, not to proceed to Brighton; but his royal highness, with a species of mock heroism, replied;—that if the intelligence related, as he presumed, to some attempt of the enemy, he was bound by the king's precise order, and by that honest zeal which was not allowed any fitter sphere for action, to hasten to his regiment; he must, therefore, deem it necessary to proceed to Brighton immediately. So ended this momentous correspondence, bringing no great credit to the heir apparent or his advisers.

During the summer, an insurrection, accompanied by circumstances of peculiar atrocity, broke out in Ireland; and, from its presumed connexion with the projects of the enemy, created much alarm: its instigators were a band of political enthusiasts, at the head of which was Robert Emmett, a young man of promising talents, and brother to the barrister of that name, who took a prominent part in the late rebellion: on account of his unguarded conduct, he had been expelled from the university of Dublin, and had found it prudent to reside abroad so long as the habeas corpus act was suspended; but, on the removal of that obstacle, he returned to Ireland, and arrived there in December, 1802. The people were still complaining of tyranny and oppression; and in few countries, indeed, could a larger proportion of the community be found destitute of the comforts of life: hence they were taught to believe themselves excluded from the fostering care of a just government, and consigned, without remorse, to all the miseries of degradation and penury: a party, therefore, was formed for the purpose of endeavoring to overturn the existing system, by whom he was joyfully received. Though the principal persons immediately connected with Emmett, Russell, Dowdall, Redmond, Stafford, and Coigley, hardly exceeded 100, these infatuated men were so

sanguine as to suppose that the spirit of rebellion would, at their bidding, pervade the whole kingdom: the usual intimation, the stoppage of mail-coaches, was to be the signal of revolt in the country; while the grand object of the insurgents in the metropolis was to secure the seat, and ministers, of government, and then to proclaim a new constitution: for some days previous to the explosion, information of danger had been conveyed to the viceroy; but he seemed to think that no extraordinary precautions were requisite, probably wishing to avoid the excitement of alarm; and conceiving that it would be better to wait for an outbreak, which might be quelled at once, than to announce a discovery, which would leave the remains of a plot to produce future mischief. Though the efforts of the conspirators to rouse a rebellious spirit in the country to a wide extent were far from successful, they determined to make an attempt in the city; and, on Saturday, the twenty-third of July, towards evening, a mob began to assemble in St. James's-street and its vicinity; pikes having been deliberately placed along the streets, for the accommodation of all who might choose to take up arms: about nine o'clock, the concerted signal was given, by a number of men riding furiously through the principal parts of the city; but a general alarm was not excited, until one Clark, who had that afternoon apprised government of the intention of the insurgents, was shot at, and dangerously wounded: at this period a small piece of ordnance, together with a sky-rocket, was discharged; and Emmett, at the head of his associates, sallied forth from his head-quarters in Marshalsea-lane: before they reached the end of it, one of the party fired a blunderbuss at colonel Browne, who was passing by, unconscious of the tumult, and killed him on the spot; from which period nothing more was heard of Emmett, or his chief associates, till they were caught by the power of the offended laws.

The assassination of the chief justice, lord Kilwarden, was the most lamentable event of this rash and criminal enterprise. That unfortunate nobleman had,

CHAP.
XLV.

1803.

on the day of insurrection, retired to his country-seat, about four miles distant, after having fulfilled the duties of his judicial office: but, on the first intimation of this commotion, his lordship, who had been attorney-general at the time of the great rebellion, and had ever since that period lived in perpetual apprehension of assassination, ordered out his carriage, and set off instantly for Dublin, accompanied by his daughter, and his nephew, the reverend Richard Wolfe: unfortunately, they arrived in Thomas-street immediately after the insurgents had opened a *depôt* of arms, and were recognised by an infuriated mob, who dragged both his lordship and his nephew to the ground, and stabbed them to death with pikes; while the lady was permitted to pass to the castle unmolested, through the midst of the rebels: about half-past ten, the insurgents were in their turn attacked, and all their mighty projects discomfited in less than an hour, by a small body of regular troops.

The privy council issued a proclamation, offering large rewards for the detection of those miscreants who had committed the above-mentioned murders; and a notice was issued by the lord mayor, requiring all the inhabitants, except the yeomanry, to keep within doors after eight in the evening: at the same time, bills for suspending the habeas corpus act, and for placing Ireland under martial law, were rapidly forwarded through their different stages in the united parliament: arrangements were also made for sending troops from England; and every measure which prudence could dictate was adopted, to secure public tranquillity. On this occasion, the Roman catholics, with lord Fingal at their head, loyally came forward, expressing abhorrence of the atrocities perpetrated on the twenty-third of July, and offering their assistance to government: by such exertions the flame of rebellion was intirely extinguished; when a special commission was issued for the trial of the rebels. Edward Kearney, a calenderer, and Thomas Maxwell Roche, an old man, nearly seventy years of age, were first executed in Thomas-street, the focus of the late insur-

rection: several others also experienced the same fate; but the most important of these proceedings was the arraignment of Robert Emmett on the nineteenth of September, who was found guilty on the clearest evidence, and executed the following day on a temporary gallows in Thomas-street: next month, Thomas Russell, who was far superior to most of the conspirators in understanding and respectability, also expiated his offences under the hands of the executioner: Coigley and Stafford were arraigned on the twenty-ninth of October; but, in consideration of having made a full disclosure of circumstances connected with the conspiracy, no farther proceedings were taken against them, or any of the remaining prisoners.

CHAP.
XLV.
1803.

A few days after the king's message had been sent to parliament, the French admiral, Linois, was despatched from the port of Brest for the East Indies, with a strong squadron; from which also the Dutch garrison at the Cape might receive reinforcements: the armies of the republic were ordered to be increased to 480,000 men; that of Holland being destined to occupy Hanover; that of Lombardy to invade Naples and to garrison Otranto, as well as other strong ports on the Adriatic. Bonaparte could only combat his maritime foe, by rendering all the shores of that element which she ruled, hostile to her navy, and impervious to her commerce: he therefore attempted to bestride Europe like a huge colossus, one foot on the Mediterranean shore, and the other on that of the Baltic. On the twenty-fifth of May, general Mortier summoned the electorate of Hanover to surrender; the first consul being determined to occupy that country as a guarantee for the restitution of Malta. The Hanoverians, unable to resist with any prospect of success, soon capitulated; and Mortier, taking peaceable possession of the country, was enabled to control the navigation of the Elbe and Weser, as well as to levy contributions on the rich Hans towns of Hamburg and Bremen: in consequence however of this seizure, and the interruption of commerce, a British squadron was appointed to blockade the mouths

Movements
of the
French.

CHAP.
XLV.

1803.

of those rivers; and this spirited measure, which might be considered as a retaliation on Germany for permitting the violation of its territory, occasioned such distress to Hamburg and Bremen, that they appealed to the king of Prussia, as one of the protectors of the neutrality of the empire: but he declined to interfere; and the French were left to continue their exactions with impunity. The surrender of Hanover by England, without a struggle, was not an unwise stroke of policy; for she thus placed the courts of Berlin and St. Petersburg in the disagreeable dilemma of lowering their sovereign dignity before Napoleon, or of seeking a British alliance: to counteract this, the plan of the first consul was, by menaces or bribery to draw Prussia into a cordial but submissive connexion. When the French usurpation of Hanover had made that power sensible of the inconvenience of a state of indecision toward France, and of the advantages arising from a close alliance with her, Hanover was the bribe proposed: all the old ministers, except Hardenburg, were disposed to accept it; when the Russian emperor Alexander happening to visit Berlin, his sentiments turned the scale: the queen and court were led by his higher feelings to despise the artful insinuations of Duroc and other French agents; while the king, rejecting the dishonorable gift, became inspired with the nobler desire of securing the independence of the empire.

Though a field of battle was at present denied to Bonaparte, his activity turned him toward military organisation; and he now formed the armies, and prepared the resources, with which he afterwards achieved such brilliant conquests. The Italian fortress of Alessandria was strengthened at an immense expense; to be, as it were, the citadel of Lombardy: from Otranto to the Texel, almost every coast and harbor saw fortifications rise about it: severe exactions were imposed on the Batavian and Italian republics; pecuniary assistance was drawn from Spain and Portugal; and the supplies of the French treasury were farther augmented by the sale of Louisiana to the United States.

for three millions of dollars: but the army and flotilla collected ostensibly for the invasion of England were the grand objects of contemplation: the former was swelled by contingents of allied states, and the chief commands in it were given to Soult, Davoust, and Ney; since the familiarity of his old generals had now become disagreeable to the first consul.

CHAP.
XLV.
1803.

The naval campaign of the present year was not distinguished by any very brilliant exploits. In June, an expedition under general Grinfield and commodore Hood captured the islands of St. Lucie and Tobago; and in September, the Dutch colonies of Demerara, Essequibo, and Berbice surrendered: the islands of St. Pierre and Miquelon also contributed to swell the list of British conquests; and to these successes may be added that of compelling the French to abandon the valuable colony of San Domingo. In Europe, the port and town of Granville were attacked on the fourteenth of September by sir James Saumarez, by whom its pier was demolished, and a number of vessels destined for the invasion of England were destroyed. Dieppe was bombarded by captain Owen, in the *Immortalité* frigate, with two bomb-vessels: the Dutch ports also, from the Zandvoort to Scheveningen, were subjected to attack, and many ships destroyed.

Naval
successes.

CHAPTER XLVI.

GEORGE III. (CONTINUED).—1803.

Meeting of parliament, and king's speech, &c.—Failure of Russian mediation announced—Suspension of the habeas corpus, and martial law, continued in Ireland—Army estimates, volunteers, &c.—General effective force in the army and navy—The king's indisposition, and speedy recovery—Opposition to the ministry joined by Mr. Pitt—His motion respecting the naval department lost—Debates on the measures of defence—Ministers, left in small majorities, determine to resign—Measure of finance brought forward, and the cabinet dissolved—Mr. Pitt again at the head of affairs—His supposed wishes, and attempts to form a cabinet—Slave-trade abolition carried in the lower, and lost in the upper house—Additional force act—Corn laws—Arrears and regulations of the civil list—Prorogation of parliament—Internal affairs of France—Execution of the duc d'Enghien—Bonaparte assumes the imperial dignity—Francis II. relinquishes his supremacy over the Germanic empire—Naval transactions—Seizure of sir George Rumbold—His liberation—Rigor of the French government—Failure of the Catamaran project—Coalition of Pitt and Addington—Meeting of parliament—Supplies—Roman catholic petition—Impeachment of lord Melville—Pitt's last speech—Napoleon crowned king of Italy at Milan—Formation of a new coalition against France—Dissensions in the British cabinet, and decline of Mr. Pitt's health.

Meeting of PARLIAMENT re-assembled on the twenty-second of November, when his majesty, after alluding to the measures adopted for a vigorous prosecution of the war, and some other less important subjects, declared in reference to the menaces of an invading foe, that as he and his people were embarked in a common cause, it was his fixed determination, should occasion arise, to share their exertions and dangers in defence of the constitution. The usual addresses were agreed to without opposition; and it was stated by the chan-

cellor of the exchequer, that offers of mediation made by the court of St. Petersburg had been readily accepted on the part of his majesty's ministers; but the discussions which arose in consequence, had not led to any amicable arrangements with France. Mr. secretary Yorke carried a motion, though not without some difficulty, for continuing the suspension of the habeas corpus act in Ireland, and for re-establishing martial law in that country. A debate, on the ninth of December, produced by a motion for referring the army estimates to a committee of supply, embraced extensive views of the general defence of the country: the regular force proposed for the public service amounted to 167,000 men: the embodied militia of Great Britain and Ireland were 110,000, and the volunteer corps upwards of 400,000: for this latter force, of which about 45,000 served without pay, it was proposed to vote the sum of £730,000, for one year, on which occasion, Mr. Wyndham inveighed with much acrimony against the military system adopted by ministers: pointing out the inferiority of volunteer associations and bodies of reserve, to a regular army of genuine soldiers, disciplined for offensive as well as defensive warfare: but his objections were met by very animated and argumentative replies from Mr. Pitt and lord Castlereagh: according to the statement of the latter, the effective force of this country, in rank and file, comprehending every description of troops, amounted to 615,000 men; while the commissioned and non-commissioned officers augmented it to 700,000. The number of ships of war amounted to 469; and an armed flotilla, to aid in defending the coasts, comprehending 800 craft of all descriptions, was nearly completed: since the commencement of hostilities, there had been issued 312,000 muskets, 16,000 pistols, and 77,000 pikes: the field-train also in Great Britain alone was increased from 356 to 460 pieces of ordnance, with complete appointments; while the stores had been nearly doubled. Mr. Fox applauded the zeal and patriotism shown by the volunteers; but he could not believe that they were capable

CHAP.
XLVI.

1804.

of acting as effectively as regulars: the minister, on the other hand, stated, that lord Moira, who commanded in Scotland, and lord Cathcart, in Ireland, were so well satisfied with the steadiness and discipline of that force, as to declare unconditionally, that they would lead them with confidence against any invaders.

On the fourteenth of February, an official bulletin, announcing that his majesty was much indisposed, excited public sympathy, from an apprehension of the recurrence of that malady by which he had formerly been afflicted: the attack however was not so serious as to render a suspension of the royal functions necessary; and, on the ninth of March all fears were removed by an assurance of the lord chancellor, that he had conceived it proper to have a personal interview with the sovereign, in order to submit some bills for the royal assent; and from the discussion which had taken place, he felt himself fully justified in asserting, 'that the king was in a state to warrant the lords commissioners in giving the royal assent to several bills.'

A message from the sovereign on the twenty-sixth of March announced a voluntary offer of the Irish militia to extend their services to Great Britain; and bills were passed, enabling his majesty to accept it, and to raise 10,000 additional militia-men in Ireland.

A systematic attack on ministers was at this time pursued by all parties in opposition, through the medium of investigations into the military and naval affairs of the empire: Mr. Pitt also, after sinking into a languid approval of administration, appeared in the character of a direct antagonist. Opinions differed respecting the motives of his conduct; some thought that he was alarmed at Mr. Addington's exclusive possession of the royal confidence, and especially provoked by the appointment of Mr. Tierney to the treasurership of the navy; while others considered him as actuated by patriotic motives, and a desire of rescuing his country from a feeble government. His opposition was particularly displayed during the pro

gress of the bill for consolidating and explaining the laws relative to volunteers; but the course of debate was interrupted by a motion, of which Mr. Pitt had before given notice, respecting the naval force of the country; which lord St. Vincent, acting on false notions of economy, had reduced from the extensive scale and complete organisation to which it attained under lord Spencer: this question was expected, more than any other, to try the strength of an administration, which, though favored by the court, had continued to lose ground with parliament and the public ever since the signature of the treaty of Amiens.

On the fifteenth of March, after expressing an expectation that part of the documents which he intended to call for would be readily granted by ministers, Mr. Pitt moved for an address, requesting that his majesty would order to be laid before parliament an account of the number of ships in commission on the thirty-first of December, 1793; on the thirtieth of September, 1801; and on the thirty-first of December, 1803; specifying the service in which they were respectively employed: he made his motion from a conviction, that if the papers were granted, it would be seen that our naval force was, at the present moment, much less adequate to the exigences and dangers of the country than at any former period. Supposing these documents granted, his next motion would be for a copy of contracts made, and orders given, in 1793, 1797, and 1803, with respect to the number of gun-vessels to be built: the board of admiralty had considered gun-boats peculiarly advantageous for resisting invasion; yet in the course of one year they had built only twenty-three, while the enemy had constructed about 1000: from the time when hostilities were renewed, our navy ought to have been advancing in numbers, instead of suffering a diminution; yet government had only contracted for building two ships of the line in merchant yards; though it was well known, that in time of war, the building of ships was nearly suspended in the royal yards, which were then wanted for repairing

CHAP.
XLVI.

1804.

damages sustained in the service: it was also worthy of observation, that in the first year of the late contest, our naval establishment was augmented from 16,000 to 76,000 seamen; whereas, having begun the present war with an establishment of 50,000, we had only increased them to 86,000 during the course of the first year.

Mr. Tierney objected strongly to the production of the papers required; being unable to conceive how the measure could, for a single instant, be entertained by the house, when no cause, no single fact, was adduced in support of it; when all possible energy pervaded that branch of the public service; when naval skill, vigilance, and activity were displayed in every quarter; and when the best officers were employed in every direction, with the highest honor to themselves and advantage to the country: he stated, that we had ships of the line, frigates, sloops, and other small vessels, to the number of 511; nine block-ships; lighters, and small craft fitted out in the king's yards, 373; and a flotilla, completely ready for service, 624; making a total of 1536 vessels, 'equipped by this unworthy admiralty.' With respect to the charge of not building ships in merchants' yards, he replied, that those built by such contractors were not found to answer; and alluded to some of them denominated 'The Forty Thieves:' one of which, the *Ajax*, had cost, during her first three years, the sum of £17,000 in repairs: he contended that it was unfair to blame the admiralty for not raising more seamen, as they were not to be had. Sheridan, sir E. Pellew, and vice admiral sir Charles Pole, warmly eulogised the character and conduct of the first lord of the admiralty; while Fox and others, adopting a different course, supported the motion for inquiry, and declared that it must terminate to the honor of earl St. Vincent, for the battle which he had fought against corruption and abuses in our naval departments, had been as arduous, if not as brilliant, as the celebrated battle from which he took his title. The debate lasted several hours; and on division, the motion was lost by a majority of 20.

votes against 130. The charge of neglecting to build ships, brought against his lordship, appears not to have been altogether ill-founded: even his friend and biographer seems to acknowledge it, when he observes, that men are prone to believe what they wish to be true; and this had induced lord St. Vincent and others to flatter themselves that hostilities were more remote than they really proved to be; and he had placed a greater reliance on Bonaparte than the latter deserved: more accurate was the discernment of Pitt and lord Grenville in this respect.

CHAP.
XLVI.
1804.

On the twenty-third of April, Fox moved for a committee to revise the several bills that had been proposed for the national defence; when Pitt again took an extensive view of its actual state. There was but one point on which these two eminent men differed on this occasion; and that was, the power vested in the sovereign of calling out all his subjects to defend the country in case of invasion. Fox was perhaps the first statesman who ventured to question the royal prerogative in this particular; for nothing is more clearly laid down by our law writers, than that a power of ordering his subjects of every description to join his standard, when the country is menaced with invasion, is vested in the king. Pitt asserted and maintained this principle: but the concurrence of opinions between these rival statesmen on all other points produced a division, in which ministers had a majority of only fifty-two in a very large house. Two days afterwards, another debate arose on this subject, in consequence of a motion made by Mr. Yorke, for the house to resolve itself into a committee on a bill for suspending the army of reserve act: this was resisted by Pitt; and on a division, there appeared in support of the ministerial plan a majority of only thirty-seven.

Mr. Addington now resolved to retire from office, as soon as the financial concerns of the year could be adjusted: the supplies were estimated at £36,000,000 for Great Britain alone; and the ways and means consisted of certain additions to the war taxes, a loan of £10,000,000, and a vote of credit for £2,500,000: on

Retirement
of Mr. Ad-
dington.

CHAP.
XLVI.

1804.

Mr. Pitt
resumes
the reins
of govern-
ment.

the twelfth of May, it was announced that the cabinet was dissolved, and that Mr. Pitt had resumed his place at the helm.

It was understood to be his wish to unite in the present administration such a portion of existing talent, character, and experience, as might create national confidence at a season of extraordinary danger. Whether he was sincere in his desire to secure the assistance of lord Grenville and Mr. Fox, has been doubted; because 'he could bear no rival;' and it was the opinion of his friends, that he could achieve every thing by his single prowess: this was expressly avowed in parliament by Canning, during a discussion on the army estimates in 1802; when he declared, 'that he was far from objecting to the large military establishments proposed; although, for the purpose of coping with Bonaparte, one great commanding spirit was worth them all:' Pitt however certainly professed to wish for the co-operation of those two statesmen; and the personal objection of the king to Fox seemed to be the only obstacle. Accustomed to the deferential tone of Mr. Addington, and shrinking from dictation, his majesty had been driven only by the force of circumstances to accept the services of Pitt himself; but against the admission of Fox into his cabinet he was resolute and immovable: without Fox however lord Grenville refused to take office; and the minister placed himself at the head of an administration substantially recruited from that which he had just displaced. Under this new arrangement, the following members of Mr. Addington's ministry retained their stations:—the duke of Portland, as president of the council; lord Eldon, chancellor; the earl of Westmoreland, lord privy seal; the earl of Chatham, master general of the ordnance; and lord Castlereagh, president of the board of control: lord Hawkesbury passed from the office of foreign affairs to the home department: the new members, beside Mr. Pitt himself, were lord Melville, first lord of the admiralty lord Harrowby, secretary for foreign affairs; lord Camden, secretary for the department of war and

colonies; and lord Mulgrave, chancellor of the duchy of Lancaster, with a seat in the cabinet: the government of Ireland lost only Mr. Wickham, the chief secretary, who was succeeded by sir Evan Nepean. The following new appointments were made in the subordinate offices of state:—Mr. William Dundas became secretary at war; George Rose and lord Charles Somerset joint paymasters of the forces; the duke of Montrose and lord Charles Spencer, joint paymasters-general; Messrs. Huskisson and Sturges Bourne secretaries to the treasury; and Mr. Canning treasurer of the navy; that oligarchical principle, which condemned this latter gentleman to so inferior an office, while it gave to lords Castlereagh and Hawkesbury seats in the cabinet, has been condemned as ‘an incubus on political freedom, as well as individual talent;’ and at a future period, he was destined to experience its bitterest effects. With regard to Mr. Addington, who now retired from the more active duties of political life, and whose chief strength lay in the personal favor of George III., he was placed by his royal patron at the head of that section in the house of commons known by the appellation of ‘the king’s friends;’ whose adherence was to his majesty’s person more than to his government: Pitt, on his return to office, soon found it necessary to conciliate the king by propitiating the leader of this confederacy.

Mr. Wilberforce, on the thirtieth of May, pressed the consideration of the slave-trade abolition; and, after an animated debate, the motion, supported both by Fox and Pitt, was carried by 124 votes against 49: a bill consequently was brought forward, limiting the period for ships to clear out from English ports for this traffic to the first of October, 1804; and the third reading was carried, on the twenty-eighth of June, by sixty-nine voices against thirty-three: but in the upper house it was rejected, on the ground of its being introduced at so late a period of the season, that parties interested would be unable to obtain substantial justice.

A plan for raising and supporting a permanent

CHAP.
XLVI.

1804.

military force, and for a general reduction of the additional militia, was introduced by the minister, on the fifth of June, under the title of 'the additional force act.' This measure aimed at an establishment, which might not only meet present circumstances, but serve for the immediate improvement of our existing system, and supply a sufficient resource to the regular army, should opportunities occur of employing our troops abroad. The bill was strenuously opposed by Wyndham, Fox, Addington, and others; but was ultimately carried through the commons by small ministerial majorities: in the upper house it passed by 150 against 69.

On the twentieth of June, a discussion of the corn laws took place. It has often been maintained that the whole system of these laws is prejudicial to the public interests, and that they ought to be totally repealed, leaving the trade free, and the prices to find their own level; but, at this time, in consequence of a report of the commons, it was thought expedient to adopt new legislative regulations concerning them. From that document, it appeared that the price of corn, from 1791 to 1803, had been irregular; though yielding, on an average, a fair remuneration to the grower: the effect of high prices had been to stimulate industry, and bring into cultivation large tracks of waste land; which, added to the last two favorable seasons, had occasioned such a depreciation in the value of grain, as would, it was said, tend to discourage agriculture, unless immediate relief were afforded; and therefore, although within the last thirteen years, no less a sum than £30,000,000 had been paid to foreign countries for supplies of corn, it was now proposed to annex a bounty to exportation; with which view a bill was introduced, allowing exportation, when the price of wheat was at, or below, forty-eight shillings a quarter; and importation, when the average price in the twelve maritime counties of England should exceed sixty-six shillings: and this measure, which was denominated by lord Stanhope, 'a bill to starve the poor,' passed into a law.

On the second of July, the house of commons resolved itself into a committee of supply, to which several accounts were referred relative to the augmentation of our civil list, the arrears of which now reached £590,000: this excess of expenditure, as it was stated, had arisen from a variety of expenses incurred by services which could not have been foreseen in the year 1802, when the house voted the discharge of arrears then due: with respect to its future condition, a proposal was made and carried, that several payments on the list should be annually discharged by parliament: these amounted to £135,000, and related to fluctuating charges; many of them arising from the war, and others from increased law expenses.

CHAP.
XLVI.
1804.

When parliament was prorogued, on the thirty-first of July, the king expressed a hope that the exertions of this country might, by their influence on other states, lead to the re-establishment of a system, which would oppose a barrier against those schemes of unbounded ambition which threatened the ancient monarchies of Europe. 'What a penalty we are now paying for endeavoring to support those dens of corruption!'

We must now advert briefly to the internal affairs of France. In February, a plot was detected at Paris, the object of which was to subvert the consular government: the principal persons accused, were general Pichegru, Georges Cadoudal, a noted Chouan chief, Lajolais his confidant, the two Polignacs, and Moreau the conqueror of Hohenlinden, a valiant soldier, but a weak man. This conspiracy was attributed to the machinations of the British government; whereas it arose from the Bourbons resident in England: it was however totally defeated. Pichegru, finding his case desperate, strangled himself in prison; Georges, with about twenty more, being found guilty, were condemned to death, though the majority were pardoned; and Moreau, having been sentenced to imprisonment for two years, was allowed to retire as an exile into the United States. During the examinations, it was elicited from some of the conspirators, that the duc

Affairs of
France.

CHAP.
XLIV.

1804.

d'Enghien, eldest son of the duc de Bourbon, was an accomplice; and that, aware of the plot going on, he was waiting on the frontiers, to enter France, as soon as he should receive news of the first consul's assassination: at the same time, it was known that the duc de Berri was about to attempt a landing at Dieppe, whither Savary was sent to lie in wait for him; but he came not: and as a party around Napoleon wished to secure themselves against the possible return of the Bourbons, it became necessary to procure a victim, and thus to compromise their master. Fouché persuaded him that his life was aimed at: the order was given; and a party of French cavalry, under general Caulincourt, passed the Rhine, and carried off the duc d'Enghien from the castle of Ettenheim, in the neutral territory of Baden: this being effected on the fifteenth of March, he was conveyed to the castle of Strasburg, and thence sent forward to Paris; where, on his arrival, he was lodged in the Temple: scarcely an interval however of repose was allowed to this unhappy prince; for he was almost immediately transferred to Vincennes; and on the very evening of his arrival, being dragged before a military commission, was found guilty of the crime of bearing arms against France, and condemned to death: the trial lasted but two hours; for the prince, instead of denying the charge, rather gloried in it; and sentence was executed that very night, by nine Italian grenadiers, in the ditch of the castle. According to Napoleon's own confession, 'he was the best of the family:' he behaved with great dignity before the court martial, and died with a noble spirit of resignation, expressing great satisfaction that his executioners were not Frenchmen: while in the prison of Strasburg, the duke wrote to the first consul, offering to disclose all he knew, if he could be assured of a pardon; but the letter was concealed by interested parties from the French ruler, until the execution was over. From the secrecy and rapidity connected with this lamentable affair, posterity will ever consider, and denominate it, a judicial murder: even in France it excited sensations of horror; but in

foreign countries it was stigmatised in becoming terms; and several notes respecting the violated neutrality of the empire, were delivered to the diet of Ratisbon, and addressed to the French minister for foreign affairs.

CHAP.
XLVI.

1804.

To divert public attention from this atrocity, the discovery of another plot for overturning the French government was announced, in which Mr. Drake, British minister at the Bavarian court, and Mr. Spenser Smith, our envoy to the duke of Wurtemberg, were said to be concerned. It appeared from some intercepted letters, that Mr. Drake had corresponded with a person, who persuaded him that a plot of this kind was in existence, and had exulted over the speedy accomplishment of some such design; the agent however was employed only to betray him: the correspondence, after having been made the subject of a special report to the first consul, was communicated to the elector; and the British envoy was dismissed from the Bavarian territories: Spenser Smith, who was beset with pretended conspirators, was also under the necessity of leaving Stutgard.

As the character of our government seems implicated in these transactions, it is satisfactory to find incontestable evidence, acquitting it of those atrocious designs, which the policy of an enemy at that time attributed to its spirit of Machiavelism. M. de Bourrienne, who himself examined the intercepted correspondence, declares, that its whole bearing proved only, what Bonaparte could not be ignorant of, that England was his declared enemy; but it contained nothing which could justify a belief that the British government authorised any attempt at assassination:¹ at the same time, it must be confessed, that the encouragement given to Bourbon conspiracies and projects, especially by landing their agents from our ships of war, was derogatory to that high and honorable bearing, which had ever distinguished Great Britain among nations; while the failure of all those projects served only to place her enemy in a more

¹ See his *Memoirs*, English edition, vol. ii. p. 264.

CHAP.
XLVI.

1804.

advantageous position. A circular letter was transmitted from the French government to the various members of the diplomatic corps, inveighing strongly against 'such a prostitution of the most honorable function that can be entrusted to a man, such a profanation of the sacred character of ambassador, as transformed him into a minister of plots, snares, and corruption.' 'All the ministers, plenipotentiaries, and envoys,' says de Bourrienne, 'whatever might be their denomination, expressed horror and indignation against these machinations:' their answers were returned only five days after the duc d'Enghien's death; 'and here,' he observes, 'one cannot help admiring the adroitness of Bonaparte, who thus compelled so many representatives of European governments to give official testimonies of regard for his person and government.'

Imperial
dignity as-
sumed by
Napoleon.

The present state of affairs now enabled Napoleon to ascend from the consular to the imperial dignity. Addresses, composed in a strain of servile adulation, had some time previously been prepared; and on the eighteenth of May, a decree finally passed the senate, abolishing the constitution, and declaring Napoleon Bonaparte emperor of the French, with the imperial dignity hereditary in his family. The pomp of courtly attendance was bestowed on this new government, in princes, grand dignitaries, marshals, chamberlains, and pages: Joseph and Louis Bonaparte were recognised as French princes; Berthier, Murat, Moncey, Jourdan, Massena, Augereau, Bernadotte, Soult, Brune, Lannes, Mortier, Ney, Davoust, Bessières, Kellerman, Lefèvre, Perignon, and Serrurier were nominated marshals of the empire: addresses of congratulation poured in from all the departments; and the clergy compared Napoleon to a second Moses, or a modern Cyrus, 'in whose elevation the finger of God was visible:' in order to complete the pageant, the pope himself came from Rome to consecrate this new Charlemagne; and on the second of December, the ceremony took place in Nôtre Dame: but it is remarkable that Bonaparte placed the crown on his own head, as well as on that of Josephine.

We are now arrived at the third division of the last period in the history of the European states-system; when a potentate with unexampled resources had arrived half-way on his road to universal monarchy. His sovereignty within France itself was absolute; his dominion extended to the Rhine, and beyond the Alps: Spain and Italy, with the Helvetic and Batavian republics, as well as the German states on the Rhine, were kept in dependence by alliances or fear; his occupation of Hanover stationed a French army in the very heart of the Prussian monarchy, and on the frontiers of Denmark; while Austria, fearing hostilities, and liable to invasion, not only deprecated her conqueror's wrath by acknowledging his imperial title, but yielded up her own supremacy over the Germanic empire, which was no longer to be considered as united under one head: in the month of August, Francis issued a decree, by which his title of emperor of Germany was exchanged for that of Austria; and Napoleon saw with undissembled pride an imperial title adopted by the first court in Europe, more recently than by himself. The distant Russia, and Sweden, still stood erect; but with a more gloomy aspect since the murder of the duc d'Enghien: both these nations refused to acknowledge the new imperial dignity; and both, before the close of the autumn, broke off diplomatic relations with the French court. The appeal however of the Russian autocrat to the diet of Ratisbon failed to rouse the spirit of the Germanic body: Prussia, whose influence in the north of the empire was supreme, showed, like Baden, no disposition to resist the aggressions of Napoleon; and a great majority of the other states, lying at the mercy of France, and fearing a renewal of hostilities, maintained an inflexible silence, and adopted a cautious policy. Still Austria was steadily employed in repairing the losses of war, and improving the condition of her military establishments; while Russia, having insisted on the evacuation of Naples by the French troops, and an indemnification according to treaty for

CHAP.
XLVI.

1804.

State of the
continent.

CHAP.
XLVI.

1804.

Naval
affairs.

the king of Sardinia, occasioned the emperor to remove into Italy some of those battalions which he had destined for the invasion of England.

Bonaparte spared no efforts to acquire the means of meeting our navy on equal terms. By a convention with Genoa, he obtained, in return for some commercial advantages, the service of 6000 seamen, with the use of its harbors, arsenals, and dock-yards; while the Ligurian republic engaged at its own expense to enlarge the basin for the reception of ten sail of the line, which were to be constructed immediately: besides, he had now the fleets of Spain intirely at his disposal; for the Spanish government, having been compelled by France to make preparations for the resumption of hostilities, was, unfortunately for itself, anticipated by Great Britain: a negotiation was pending between the cabinets of London and Madrid, when despatches from admiral Cochrane made known to our admiralty the large scale on which works were carried on in the port of Ferrol: he expressed his conviction, that in a few days a very formidable squadron would be ready for sea; and doubted not that the Spanish government waited only for the arrival of ships conveying treasures from South America, in order to commence hostilities. In consequence of this information, captain Moore was sent with four frigates to cruise off Cadiz, for the purpose of intercepting and detaining such Spanish ships of war homeward-bound, as contained bullion or treasure: on the fifth of October, he fell in with four large frigates; which, finding themselves pursued, formed in line of battle, and continued steering for Cadiz, without heeding his summons to shorten sail: the British commodore then fired a shot across the bows of the second ship, which brought them to a parley; and their commander was informed that captain Moore had instructions to detain the squadron; that it was his wish to execute this duty without bloodshed; but the surrender must be made instantly. Castilian honor could not yield to this insulting declaration, and a close conflict was the con-

sequence; when, in less than ten minutes, the Spanish frigate, *Las Mercedes*, blew up; and the others struck in succession, after sustaining considerable loss.

CHAP.
XLVI.
1804.

A mournful incident attended the explosion of *Las Mercedes*; the whole crew of which perished, except her second captain and forty-five men: a gentleman of rank, who was returning to Spain in that ship, with his whole family, consisting of his lady, four daughters and five sons, had passed with one of the latter on board another frigate before the action commenced; and they had the horror of witnessing the dreadful catastrophe, which in a moment severed them from their dearest relatives, and deprived them of a large fortune, accumulated during an expatriation of five and twenty years. The squadron was from the *Rio de la Plata*, and contained, beside merchandise of great value, more than 4,000,000 dollars, of which about 800,000 were on board the frigate which exploded. Our admiralty was most deservedly blamed for not having sent such a force to intercept these ships, as would have warranted their commander to submit, without impeachment of his honor; whereas the equality of strength rendered a sanguinary combat inevitable. Negotiations were not immediately broken off in consequence of this event; but after some time consumed in fruitless endeavors by the British government to obtain a disclosure of existing engagements between France and Spain, his catholic majesty issued a declaration of war on the twelfth of December.

While our attention is directed to the British navy, we must not forget an extraordinary instance of gallant conduct in captain Dance, senior officer of the *China* fleet. When admiral Linois withdrew from the roads of Pondicherry, he captured several East India ships; made a successful descent on Bencoolen; and then, collecting his force, which comprised one second-rate ship, two of forty guns, a corvette of twenty-eight, with a cutter and brigantine of eighteen each, cruised off the straits of Malacca, in expectation of the British homeward-bound fleet from Canton. On the fifth of February, this fleet, consisting of fifteen company's

CHAP.
XLVI.
1804.

ships from China, twelve country ships, with a Portuguese Indiaman, and a brig in company, passed Macao roads, when the Portuguese and one China ship separated from the rest: on the fourteenth, the remainder fell in with Linois, and their commodore instantly formed a line of battle in close order, as a challenge to the enemy. At sunset, the French squadron was close on his rear ships, but did not attempt any hostile operation during the night: at daybreak next morning, he was about three miles to windward, when the British commander again offered battle: at one, P. M., captain Dance, being apprehensive lest his rear should be cut off, made the signal to attack each of the enemy's ships in succession. The Royal George, from her advanced situation, sustained the brunt of the action; while the Ganges and Earl Camden opened their fire as soon as they came within distance: but, before any other ship could take part in the affair, the enemy bore away to the eastward, and were pursued for two hours by captain Dance, who thus preserved from capture a property estimated at £1,500,000. On his arrival in England, he was merely dubbed a knight by the king; but more liberal rewards were distributed by the East India company among the commanders and their brave crews: nor were the representatives of the few that fell in the engagement forgotten.

Rigor of
the French
govern-
ment.

The spirit of hostility lately exhibited by Russia and Sweden, increased the jealousy of the French government against British influence on the continent; and, under the pretence of frustrating a conspiracy, another insult was committed against a neutral state: for on the twenty-fifth of October, sir George Rumbold, British envoy in the circle of Lower Saxony, was seized in his country-house near Hamburg by a party of French troops, conveyed to Paris, and imprisoned in the Temple. On the subject of this outrage, application was made by our court to that of Berlin; but a remonstrance from his Prussian majesty for the liberation of sir George had been already attended with success; and he was conveyed, under a flag of truce, to the Niobe frigate, off Cherbourg; but although restitu-

tion of his papers was in vain demanded. A severer fate awaited the unfortunate captain Wright; who died in the Temple at Paris, under circumstances which gave rise to suspicions that his death was effected by violence: he had been the fellow-prisoner of sir Sidney Smith, with whom he escaped from captivity; and, after having served with that officer on the coast of Egypt, had effected the landing of Pichegru, Georges, and other conspirators on the coast of France: on the nineteenth of May, while cruising in Quiberon-bay, he was becalmed, taken prisoner by some French gun-boats, and conveyed to his old place of confinement; but he did not long survive this second captivity.

CHAP.
XLVI.
1801.

British naval operations were chiefly confined to a blockade of the enemy's harbors, and occasional attacks on their flotilla at Boulogne: as this latter force began to put itself into motion about the month of August, and an unusual degree of activity was observed on shore, apprehensions of invasion became general throughout Great Britain: the various armed vessels of the enemy, although under protection of the batteries, were vigorously assailed by our ships; and incessant firing on both sides tended to increase an opinion that this long-threatened attack was about to take place; under which impression active preparations were made to receive them; all fear however subsided, till the beginning of October; when about 150 vessels again ventured outside of the pier at Boulogne. In order to quiet alarm, and to destroy, if possible, the enemy's means of making a descent on our coasts, ministers adopted the scheme of an American projector, to destroy this flotilla by the use of fire-ships and catamarans: these latter machines were copper vessels filled with combustibles, and so constructed as to explode at a given time by clock-work; they were to be fastened to the bows of the vessels by the aid of a small raft, rowed by one man; who, being up to the chin in water, was expected, in the darkness of the night, to escape discovery. Sir Sidney Smith and other active officers were selected for this arduous service; the attacking force was covered by lord

Catamaran
project.

CHAP.
XLVI

1804.

Keith's blockading squadron; and so high was public expectation raised, that Mr. Pitt, and several other cabinet ministers, came down to Walmer-castle, in order to witness the proceedings. On the second of October, his lordship anchored at the distance of about a league and a half from the hostile port; and, soon after nine at night, a detachment of fire-ships was launched: as the first vessel came steadily on, with all sails set, the French opened a tremendous fire on her, and were at first astonished at its not being returned: this very circumstance however soon explained to them the nature of their adversary; and, as the other fire-ships approached, the flotilla opened passages, and allowed them to proceed into the rear: at half-past ten, the first exploded, without the slightest mischief done to ships or batteries; a second, third, and fourth met with no better success; and, after twelve vessels had been thus uselessly employed, the project, on which so much labor and ingenuity had been expended, terminated to the disgrace of those who had projected a plan of warfare totally at variance with our national character. To Bonaparte it served as a pretext for disseminating bitter invectives against us throughout the continent; while many persons were induced to believe that he had not adopted his own violent measures without means of justification.

Under the existing circumstances of England, France, and other European nations, who, that knew the policy of our cabinet, could doubt its making an attempt to form a new coalition? The first thing to be done was to procure a powerful continental ally; and this the late breach between the czar and Bonaparte promised to accomplish: the British minister however only anticipated the wishes of the latter, who could no longer permit his immense army to parade idly in sight of the channel: but before Pitt could engage in these mighty projects abroad, he found it necessary to strengthen his power at home; nor had he been long minister, when he felt the necessity of re-inforcement. Lord Grenville, to whom he again applied, honorably refused to separate himself from the

interests of Fox; so that, fearing to meet parliament in the ensuing session without assistance, he was reduced to the humiliating necessity of invoking that of Mr. Addington: the public heard this at first with incredulous surprise; but the reconciliation, insisted on by the king, took place in the royal presence, and was proclaimed early in December.

CHAP.
XLVI.
1805.

While Pitt was laying the foundation of his new coalition, Bonaparte played off another of those tricks, which he frequently adopted, to mislead his adversaries, and to cast a veil over his own projects: a letter written by his own hand was sent to the king of England, with a professed desire, not only of peace, but of disengaging so important a negotiation from the perplexities and delays of cabinet diplomacy. As it had never been customary for the British sovereign to communicate directly with a foreign potentate, lord Mulgrave addressed an answer to the French minister, intimating the king's wishes for the blessing of peace, on terms compatible with the permanent security of Europe; but stating the impracticability of meeting the overture now made more fully, until he had held communication with those continental powers, to whom he stood pledged by confidential connexions and relations.

Mr. Addington having been called up to the house of peers by the title of viscount Sidmouth, was appointed to succeed the duke of Portland as president of the council: at the same time, lord Mulgrave was made secretary for foreign affairs in the place of lord Harrowby; the earl of Buckinghamshire obtained the chancellorship of the duchy of Lancaster; and Mr. Vansittart, with other friends of lord Sidmouth, was sworn of the privy council. On the fifteenth of January the session of parliament was opened by the king in person, who announced that preparations for invasion were still carried on by France with unceasing activity, though the pacific communications of her ruler had been met by a corresponding disposition on his part; and that Spain, under French control, had issued a declaration of war

Meeting of
parliament.

CHAP.
XLVI.

1805.

against this country. The usual addresses were passed unanimously in both houses.

When the subject of the war with Spain came under discussion, the attack on its frigates, while navigating the ocean in supposed security, was severely censured by several speakers; especially by lord Grenville, who reprobated it as an act of violence, contrary to all the laws of civilised warfare; 'no capture of treasure,' according to his opinion, 'being able to wash away the stain of innocent blood thus brought on our arms.'

On the twenty-third of January, 120,000 seamen, including marines, were voted for the present year; and a sum not exceeding £2,886,000, for payment of the men: at the same time, £964,000 were granted for victualling the ships, and £4,680,000 for wear and tear, &c. On the fourth of February, the secretary at war moved the army estimates, which amounted to £12,395,490 for 312,000 men, under various heads of service. In the budget, which was opened on the eighteenth, the supplies were stated at £44,500,000 for Great Britain and Ireland: the ways and means comprised a loan of £20,000,000 for the former country, and £2,500,000 for the latter; a considerable addition was made to the war taxes; the income-tax was raised to six and a quarter per cent; and the salt duty was augmented by one-half; but modifications were made in favor of persons engaged in the fisheries. The new taxes imposed in perpetuity were estimated at £1,600,000; and the minister, while thus adding to the public burdens, concluded an eloquent speech by congratulating the house on the increasing prosperity of the country.

Claims
of the
catholics.

Petitions from the Roman catholics of Ireland, presented by lord Grenville in one house and by Mr. Fox in the other, praying relief from civil disabilities, gave rise to interesting discussions; but the minister declared that existing circumstances were unfavorable to their request, which was accordingly rejected by large majorities. As Mr. Pitt resigned office professedly because he could not force the king'

conscience to grant the claims of Roman catholics, and resumed it with an acquiescence in their disabilities,² his character has been vehemently attacked, on the score of sacrificing principle to ambition. Whether his memory ought to be so stigmatised, can only be known to that Being who looks into the recesses of the human heart; therefore it becomes not the historian to decide arrogantly on this point: Pitt and his party always denied that any express promise was given: his opinions on the subject appear to have undergone considerable modification; and whether he was justified in sacrificing to expediency opinions so modified, and a promise not given, but implied, must be left to the reader's decision: at all events, justice requires us to hear what he said in his own defence. He denied any right, on the part of the Romanists, to a participation of political power; and he entertained the question solely on the ground of expediency: previously to the union, he thought that in no possible case could the privileges demanded be given, consistently with a due regard to protestant interests in Ireland, and the internal tranquillity of that kingdom; to the frame and structure of our constitution; and to a permanent connexion between the two countries. He admitted, that after the union, he saw the subject in a different light; and thought, that with a united parliament, these privileges might, under certain guards and conditions, be granted, without danger to the established church or to the protestant constitution; and he thought so still, if other circumstances interposed no objections, and if by a wish these demands could be carried into effect: but in declaring this opinion, he did not mean to shut his eyes against the conviction, that a catholic, however honorable his intentions might be, must feel anxious to advance the interests of his religion, whenever power and oppor-

² Many of these disabilities were at this time certainly most grievous and deplorable. A Roman catholic might rise to a lieutenant-colonelcy in the Irish army, but in that of England he could hold no commission: in the navy, a young man could rise no higher than the rank of midshipman: hence the youth of Ireland, who had a taste for the naval profession, were obliged to go to America, and add strength to those who were soon to become our enemies.

CHAP.
XLVI.

1805.

tunity were favorable to him; for this was in the very nature of man: neither did he mean to say that the catholics were not engaged in those scenes which preceded the rebellion of 1798; nor yet to deny, while jacobin principles were its foundation, that the influence of the priests, themselves tainted with such principles, might have aggravated the evil, though they were not the cause of it. He had hoped to avert danger by adopting measures of caution and security: his wish was not to apply tests to the religious tenets of the catholics, but to render their priests dependent in some sort on the government, or links between it and the people; in other words, to make it their interest to discharge their duty, and lead their flocks to good, as they had hitherto led them to evil: but he never thought it would be prudent to throw down abruptly the guards and fences of our constitution: even his own system would have been defended by regulations, giving additional respect and influence to protestant interests. In order however to render such a measure effective, he deemed a general concurrence of the community indispensable: he meant it as a measure of conciliation and peace; which it could never be, unless it gratified the wishes of one party without exciting fears or jealousy in the other: he saw no appearance of such concurrence at present; and therefore he thought a discussion of the question could only tend to revive those dissensions, which he wished to extinguish; to reproduce that acrimony which had before prevailed; and to excite those hopes, which, if they were to be disappointed, might produce the greatest mischief. 'I ask any gentleman,' said he, 'whether he does not believe, looking to the opinions of the members of the established church, of the nobility, of the men of property, of the middle and respectable classes of society, in short, of the mass of protestants both in this country and in Ireland, that there exists the greatest repugnance to this measure; and that even if it could be now carried, so far from producing conciliation and union, it would rather tend to disappoint all the prospects of advan-

tage, which, under other circumstances, might be derived from it? Even those who have argued most strongly in its favor, have candidly confessed, that, in the present state of men's minds, it is not likely to be carried; and I should disguise my real sentiments, if I did not say that, at present, the prevailing sentiment is strongly against the measure: what circumstances may occur to overcome this sentiment, it is not for me to predict or conjecture.'

It is remarkable, that about this time, the heir apparent changed his sentiments with regard to catholic emancipation; of which he had been so strenuous an advocate, that in 1797 he submitted to his father in writing, with great earnestness, his conviction of the necessity of that measure: the alteration in his sentiments took place during Mr. Addington's administration; and it appears,³ that on the present occasion he directly intimated his wish for Mr. Fox to abstain from presenting a petition: the request came too late; but that, if it had come sooner, it would have been unavailing, we have good assurance in the simple and honest words of that statesman's reply; which, as Mr. Moore observes, 'breathe a spirit of sincerity, from which princes might take a lesson with advantage.' The speech made by him in the house on this occasion is characterised by lord Brougham as 'a noble performance, instinct with sound principle; full of broad and striking views of policy; abounding in magnanimous appeals to justice, and bold assertions of right; in one passage touching and pathetic—the description of a catholic soldier's feelings on reviewing some field where he had shared the dangers of the fight, yet repining to think that he could never taste the glories of command.'⁴ His royal highness however did not adhere to that political neutrality which he had observed under the late administration; for he now acted openly in concert with members of the opposition, and occasionally attended the house of peers, where he took his seat between lords Moira and

³ See a letter in Moore's Life of Sheridan, vol. ii. p. 333.

⁴ Lord Brougham's Statesmen of the time of George III. vol. i. p. 186.

CHAP.
XLVI.

1805.

Grenville: he spoke however only once, to defend the duke of Clarence, who was absent, against some expressions of the lord chancellor; in which case, his observations were made with such facility and propriety, as to produce a general expression of regret that he addressed their lordships so rarely.

On the nineteenth of June, in consequence of a royal message relative to negotiations pending between Great Britain and some of the continental powers, a sum not exceeding £3,500,000 was granted to his majesty, that he might enter into such engagements, and take such measures, as the exigency of the times demanded: on the twelfth of July parliament was prorogued by commission; it remains however that we notice some proceedings which occupied a large portion of the session, and which strongly engaged public attention.

Impeach-
ment of
lord Mel-
ville.

Among the various measures of reform meditated or determined on by the late administration, an inquiry into the abuses of the naval department was one of the most prominent; and a bill was passed in 1803, appointing commissioners for that purpose: this measure owed its origin to lord St. Vincent, then at the head of the admiralty; whose office, on Pitt's return to power, lord Melville had obtained: in the mean time, the commissioners had produced many reports; the truth of which appeared to implicate the new first-lord; who, while he filled the office of treasurer of the navy, had illegally retained in his hands large balances of the public money: this report was brought under consideration of the commons in April, by Mr. Whitbread, who observed, that the commissioners had done their duty to the public; and it was assigned to him to bring to justice those whom they had exposed: nor did the report involve lord Melville only; but also Alexander Trotter his paymaster, Mark Sprott a stock-broker, and some others. In exhibiting a charge against this noble lord, he did not accuse a mere unprotected individual; but one who, during a period of thirty years, had been in the uninterrupted possession of lucrative offices, and had

exercised an extensive influence on public affairs: he had many personages attached to him by the consciousness of obligation; and though not personally present, he had no doubt powerful friends in that house, ready to undertake his defence. Mr. Whitbread now referred to the act of 1785, of which lord Melville (then Mr. Dundas) was a supporter, for regulating the department of treasurer of the navy; and also to the order of council, by which his salary was advanced from £2000 to £4000 a year, in lieu of all profits, fees, or emoluments, which might have been derived from money lying in his hands. The charges were classed under three heads: first, his application of the public money to other uses than those of the naval department, in express contempt of an act of parliament;—secondly, his connivance at a system of peculation in an individual, for whose conduct he was officially responsible;—and, thirdly, his own participation in that system: ‘to the honor of public men,’ said Mr. Whitbread, ‘charges like the present have seldom been exhibited; and it is remarkable, that the only instance, for a long period, is one that was preferred against sir Thomas Rumbold by this noble lord himself, on the ground of peculations in India. With respect to the first point of accusation, it appeared from the report, that there had been, for several years, deficiencies in the accounts of the treasurer of the navy, to the amount of £600,000 a year, and upwards: when lord Melville was asked a plain question, respecting the appropriation of this money, he, as well as Trotter, professed total ignorance of those deficiencies; but presently, beginning to recover his recollection, he confessed, that from the year 1786, down to the period of his examination, he had been in the habit of drawing out public money, and placing it in the hands of his own bankers: when the commissioners extended their inquiries a little farther, he had the assurance to declare that they had no right to interfere in his private affairs: in a letter to the commissioners, he acknowledged the fact of advances having been made to him; but refused to give the other

CHAP.
XLVI.
1805.

CHAP.
XLVI.

1805.

information required, because he would not disclose state secrets, and because he was not in possession of the accounts of advances made to other departments; having himself committed them to the flames: and not only had the noble lord destroyed the papers, but he had actually lost all recollection of the whole transaction! The second charge against him was, that he had connived at the appropriation of public money to private purposes: Trotter did not deny that he had large sums in the hands of Coutts, his private banker; but remarked, that it was more convenient for the money to be there than in the Bank of England, and also more secure; for the truth of which opinion he appealed to lord Melville;—to lord Melville, who had framed and sanctioned the bill of 1785! to lord Melville, who, not satisfied with the regulations of that bill, proposed even stricter limitations in 1786! For what purpose however was there so constant a fluctuation in Trotter's account at Coutts's? and why such perpetual draughts for money, in the name of Trotter? At the time when he was anxious for the safety of what passed through his hands, was it always lodged at Coutts's, allowing that to be the fittest place of security? no; it was employed in discounting bills, in forming speculations, in gambling on the stock exchange: no less than £34,000,000 of the public money had passed through the hands of lord Melville's paymaster; and had Trotter's speculation failed, it was not to him, but to his lordship, that the public would have had to look for redress. While the people were struggling with the heaviest burdens ever laid on a nation, Trotter, and his silent, discreet broker, Mark Sprott, were putting heads together to lay out the public money to their greatest advantage; and lord Melville never once inquired into his paymaster's proceedings. On the third part of the subject (the suspicion of criminal participation), Mr. Whitbread said, that lord Melville had found Trotter a clerk in the navy-pay office; he made him his paymaster, and in a short time his agent: in this situation, his lordship had pecuniary concerns with him to

a very considerable amount; but was unable to inform the commissioners, whether the advances made to him by Trotter were from his own or the public money: the truth was, that lord Melville knew, when he first patronised this man, that although well connected, he had no property except what was derived from his salary: it was absolute equivocation, then, for his lordship to pretend ignorance of the source whence Trotter was enabled to supply him with advances.' Mr. Whitbread concluded by moving thirteen resolutions, founded on the circumstances which he had thus developed.

Pitt, in a long and able speech, observed, that neither the report, nor Mr. Whitbread himself, alleged that any loss to the public had proceeded from the transactions under consideration: he admitted that the subject was of a grave and solemn nature; and that if, in a great pecuniary department irregularities had been committed, though unattended with loss, it might be their duty to set a mark on such proceedings: but all the circumstances of this case were not before them in the report; and, till these were investigated, the house could not be in a situation to come to any vote. On the face of the accounts, £100,000 was the whole amount of the advances made to lord Melville: it was known, that, of all the sums, amounting to £160,000,000, which had passed through his lordship's hands, every farthing had been regularly accounted for; and it would be found, that, of the £100,000, which, on the face of the account, was paid to his lordship, many of the draughts were in reality payments for public services. If this could be made out, as he was informed it could, it was of itself a conclusive argument in favor of inquiry: he therefore moved that a select committee be appointed to consider the tenth report of the commissioners, and the documents connected with it; in order that, having examined the same, they may report their opinion to the house: at the suggestion of Fox, Mr. Pitt consented, in the first instance, to move the previous question: Mr. Tierney observed, that, during the period

CHAP.
XLVI.

1803.

in which he was treasurer of the navy, he felt no inconvenience from complying with the act of parliament; and it was his opinion that the report of the commissioners should be taken as conclusive evidence against lord Melville. After a number of observations from the attorney-general, Mr. Canning, the master of the rolls, and lord Castlereagh, in favor of a select committee, and from lord Henry Petty, Messrs. Ponsonby, Fox, and Wilberforce, in support of the resolutions, the house divided; when, as it appeared that there were 216 votes for, and the same number against Mr. Whitbread's motion, the speaker gave a casting vote in its favor.

On the tenth of April, the house was informed that a resignation of his office had been tendered by lord Melville, and accepted by the king; when Mr. Whitbread observed, that, had the issue of the debate on Monday been merely of a personal or party nature, he might have been satisfied with his lordship's removal from the responsibility, dignity, and emolument attached to the situation which he had resigned; but he thought it so necessary that lord Melville should be prevented from ever again polluting with his presence the councils of his sovereign, that, before any other proceeding, he should move an address to the throne, praying his majesty to deprive the noble lord of every civil office held during the pleasure of the crown, and to dismiss him from the national councils for ever: he then asked whether Mr. Pitt was prepared to give a pledge to this effect, and whether Trotter had been dismissed? With regard to the latter point, Mr. Canning replied in the affirmative; but he did not think that the case of lord Melville, which, at most, amounted to a bare suspicion, warranted that severity of proceeding now proposed. After an animated conversation, Mr. Whitbread consented to withdraw his motion; in lieu of which, he moved that the resolutions of the former night be laid before his majesty by the whole house; and on the following day they were presented accordingly.

On the sixth of May, the erasure of lord Melville's

name from the list of privy counsellors was proposed; when the minister observed, he had reason to believe that the measure was generally considered expedient, and he had therefore felt it his duty to recommend it: he had not given this advice without a bitter pang; but he could not suffer feelings of private friendship to interfere with a declared sense of the majority of that house. Mr. Whitbread then inquired whether lord Melville held any place of profit during the pleasure of the crown; and being answered, none but for life, he withdrew his motion.

CHAP.
XLVI.
1806.

The commissioners of naval inquiry had, in the early progress of these discussions, been sedulously occupied in researches arising out of the tenth report; and Mr. Whitbread now gave notice of an intention to move for an impeachment; which was met, on the part of the honorable Robert Dundas, lord Melville's son, by a requisition, that the noble lord should be previously admitted and heard by the house: leave having been obtained from both houses, his lordship, escorted by the serjeant-at-arms, advanced within the bar, and commenced his defence on the eleventh of June. He solemnly asserted, that he never knew that any money had been drawn for the purposes of speculation; and expressed indignation at the charge that such transactions had been conducted with his privy, or that Trotter had enjoyed the advantage of his knowledge of the confidential secrets of government: his lordship as positively denied all participation in Trotter's profits; but he admitted, that, when the money was drawn for naval purposes, he had suffered him to place it in the house of Coutts and Co., until it should be wanted; though it was false that he had ever given him power to draw money from the Bank indiscriminately: he certainly did suppose that the paymaster derived a profit from the sums invested in Coutts's bank, but he had never considered it a clandestine or unlawful proceeding; and the reason why he had not directly disclaimed any share in those profits at his examination before the committee, was because he had at that moment been informed of the confusion in which his

CHAP.
XLVI.

1805.

paymaster's accounts stood; and there was a doubt in his own mind, whether he might not have unintentionally received what was his own property from unlawful profits. His lordship referred to two sums, of about £10,000 each, the circumstances relating to which he felt equally bound, by private honor and public duty, never to disclose; though he solemnly affirmed that those sums were neither used, nor intended to be used, for any object or profit by himself: he certainly had directed his agent to procure for him the loan of £20,000, for which he had paid regular interest; but it was not till within the last six weeks that he knew Trotter to be the lender of the money: after explaining the nature of his transactions with respect to the loyalty loan, to which he subscribed the sum of £10,000, his lordship declared, that when he destroyed all vouchers, it was because he considered them useless, and not from the remotest apprehension of danger from their existence. He could scarcely believe that an impeachment was intended; he was equally incredulous with respect to an indictment; and he did not yet despair of receiving justice from a deluded country.

Mr. Whitbread, in reply, observed, 'that the excuse offered by lord Melville for not directly answering questions, in consequence of the mixed state of Trotter's accounts, was strange and incredible:' he argued on the suspicious circumstance of his refusing to give any account of the two sums of £10,000; and declared, that if his lordship would refer the matter to a jury of honor, consisting of the chancellor of the exchequer, Mr. Wyndham, and any other persons of equal integrity, he should, in case they acquitted him, feel perfectly satisfied: he concluded by moving, 'that Henry lord viscount Melville be impeached of high crimes and misdemeanors.' A long debate ensued; in the course of which an impeachment was objected to, as cumbrous and expensive; and an amendment moved, 'that the attorney-general be directed to prosecute lord Melville for the several offences which he appears to have committed:' this measure was adopted by a small majority;

but it was finally determined, on the twenty-fifth of June, that the house should resort to the mode of prosecution by impeachment; Mr. Whitbread being appointed manager. On this occasion, Pitt delivered his last speech in parliament, and argued strongly for a trial by impeachment, in preference to proceedings by a criminal prosecution.

CHAP.
XLVI.
1805.

Mr. Pitt's
last speech.

After the failure of Napoleon's letter to his Britannic majesty, which was no more than he expected, that potentate took a journey to Milan, in order to place on his anointed brow the iron crown of Charlemagne: also by a stroke of the pen, he annulled the constitution of the Ligurian republic, and incorporated Genoa with the French empire; having, as he expressed himself to its new governor, Le Brun, only one object in view, which was to obtain 15,000 seamen: he had in fact set his hopes of conquest on a great naval struggle; in which if he should prove victorious, the invasion of England would then be more practicable, and its success less problematical. The plan which he had imagined was, to distract the attention of the British government, and scatter its fleets, by despatching his own squadrons, some to the West Indies, and others to the Spanish ports; after which, if fortune favored him, he might effect a junction of all, and collect a force so much superior to that of his adversaries, as to ensure success in a naval combat: this scheme, however, although it had a place in his imagination, was evidently not his principal object: he was not ignorant of the vast coalition now forming against him; and while he was at Boulogne, with his looks directed to England, his thoughts were diverted toward Austria: even before he took the journey to Milan, he observed to Bourrienne, when he sent him as envoy to Hamburg;—'I have views with respect to Germany, in the furthering of which you may be useful: it is there I intend to strike England; I must deprive her of the continent.' But however hostile were the intentions of Napoleon toward the still independent powers of Europe, they anticipated him in declaring war: the formation of a third coalition against France had com-

Napoleon
crowned
king of
Italy.

CHAP.
XLVI.

1806.

menced, of which England was the centre; and a general rising of Europe was, according to Pitt's plans, to reduce the new empire to its ancient boundaries, without interfering with its internal administration: but the project could not be so well executed as contrived. An alliance was contracted with Russia, in April; and with Sweden, already allied to Russia, in August: it was agreed that a combined Russian and Swedish army was to land in Pomerania; and had the power and talent of Gustavus IV. been equal to his zeal and hatred of the French, their emperor would have found in that monarch his most formidable opponent. Austria, inclined to redeem her defeats, offended by Napoleon's assumption of the royal title at Milan, and alarmed by his occupation of Genoa, accepted in August the offer of a British subsidy, and the aid of those Russian armies, which under Suwarroff had before driven the French out of Italy. Prussia secretly approved the spirit of this coalition, but its ministers in the French interest prevailed, and preserved its neutrality: yet without the accession of this power, an effectual attack on France was hardly probable: its mere neutrality was a protection to the northern half of the French empire.

Dissentions
in the
cabinet.

In the mean time, the British cabinet was in a divided state; and the conflicting sentiments of its members soon convinced Pitt that the possession of power did not necessarily follow the possession of place. It appears, that soon after the Easter recess, lord Sidmouth suggested the propriety of removing lord Melville from the privy-council; but the premier conceived that both parliament and the country would be satisfied by the resignation of his office: neither party was disposed to yield; and lord Sidmouth, offended also by the refusal of Pitt to place his friend the earl of Buckinghamshire at the head of the admiralty, instead of lord Barham, expressed an intention of retiring from the cabinet, in company with that noble earl and Mr. Vansittart: this secession however was for the present averted, by the erasure of lord Melville's name from the list of privy-counsellors, and the

vote of impeachment which followed; whilst a little reflection, and perhaps some seasonable advice, convinced lord Sidmouth of his error; and he requested permission to withdraw the proffered resignations: this was readily granted: but his lordship seems only to have courted reconciliation, in order to retire with a better grace: the difference of opinion between Mr. Pitt and himself respecting lord Melville was always ready as a pretext; and on the tenth of July, the two noble lords again sent in their resignations, which were accepted without hesitation; their places being filled up by earl Camden and lord Harrowby; while lord Castlereagh was advanced to the foreign department. All these circumstances, particularly the loss of so able a colleague and tried a friend as lord Melville, occasioned deep mental anxiety to Mr. Pitt, on whom nearly the whole weight of public business now devolved: this anxiety, which was still farther increased by the uncertain and perplexing state of affairs on the continent, acted strongly on a constitution, weakened by incessant application to business, and a habit of forcing the jaded spirits by free potations of wine, until his appetite began to fail, and his health rapidly declined.

CHAP.
XLVI.
1805.

Decline of
Mr Pitt's
health.

CHAPTER XLVII.

GEORGE III. (CONTINUED.)—1805.

Bonaparte's views and preparations respecting the invasion of England—Pursuit of the French fleet by lord Nelson, &c.—Robert Calder's action, and consequent disappointment of Napoleon's schemes—Villeneuve takes shelter in Cadiz—Nelson pointed to the command of the fleet sent against him—Derangement of Napoleon's plan against the continental powers—advance—Surrender of Mack at Ulm—Manœuvres of admiral Collingwood off Cadiz—Arrival of lord Nelson—His manœuvres and instructions to his officers, &c.—Villeneuve with the combined fleets puts to sea—Preparations, &c. for battle—Act of Trafalgar, and death of Nelson, &c.—Sir Richard Strachan's victory over Dumanoir—Bonaparte's operations in Austria—Dispute with Prussia—His advance towards Brunn against allied emperors—Disposition of his army—Battle of Austerlitz—Negotiations—Napoleon's indignation against Prussia—Treaty of Presburg, and consequences of it—Proclamation against the court of Naples—Conduct of its cabinet, &c.—Its crown conferred on Joseph Bonaparte—The old court retire to Palermo—State of Ireland—Meeting of parliament, &c.—Death and character of Mr. Pitt—New administration under lord Grenville—Affairs of the prince and princess of Wales—Negotiation for peace, &c.—Speech of Mr. Canning relating to lord Liverpool—Mr. Wyndham's act to limit military service, &c.—The budget, &c.—Bill for the examination of public accounts and improvement in various departments—East India expenditure—Trial of lord Melville—Abolition of the slave-trade—Canning's opposition—Mr. Fox's illness and death, &c.—Consequent changes in some ministerial departments—Admiral Boscawen's victory—Capture of the Cape of Good Hope—Expedition to Buenos Ayres—Dispute with America—State of Prussia—Naples with regard to France—Battle of Maida—Condition of Prussia—Her preparations of war—Manœuvres of Napoleon—Battles of Jena and Auerstadt—Napoleon enters Berlin—Imperial decree—Alteration of the continental relations by Bonaparte—Insurrection of the Poles—Sebastiani's intrigues at Constantinople—War between Russia and the Porte.

It has been a subject of much doubt whether Bonaparte ever seriously meditated the invasion of England. Many writers, supposed to be intimately acquainted with his sentiments, and among them his secretary and friend, de Bourrienne, maintain that he had really no such intention: but Napoleon himself has declared the contrary; asserting that he was fully sensible of the risks with which the undertaking would have been attended, though willing to brave them all for so great an object. From a collation of different accounts, it appears, that, like a skilful tactician, he had two moves in view; and success in either of these would put a finishing stroke to his mighty projects: if the valor of British seamen, or fury of the elements, should counteract his schemes on the ocean, the resources of a crafty policy, which stopped at no enormity, would at any time give him an opportunity of turning against the continent those congregated forces with which he would willingly have subdued his island foes.

CHAP.
XLVII.

1805.

Bona-
parte's pre-
parations of
invasion.

It is certain, however, that Napoleon never intended to invade England by traversing the channel under cover of a fog, by aid of a favorable wind, in flat-bottomed boats and gun-vessels: his arrangements were better made; and his grand aim was to disperse the force which he could not combat in a mass. In pursuance of this plan, his fleets were ordered to assemble from Toulon, Rochefort, Brest, Cadiz, and Ferrol; to draw after them toward the West Indies our blockading squadrons; and, returning rapidly, to present themselves in the channel before the English could be well aware that they had crossed the line: being thus master of a mighty armament, calculated at seventy ships of the line, he would have embarked his troops on board the flotilla, and transported them to the British shores; on which he expected to land, march rapidly to the metropolis, and revolutionise the country, before our naval forces could have been collected to prevent his transit, or our land forces unite to oppose his progress. In expectation of the arrival of these different squadrons, long detained in

CHAP.
XLVII.

1805.

their harbors, his troops received orders to be ready to throw themselves on board at a moment's warning: instructions given to marshal Ney, who was to lead the expedition, provided for every contingency; the vessels assigned to each division, and the order in which they were to sail out of the harbor, were fixed; arms, horses, artillery, combatants, camp-followers, all had received their places; all were arranged according to instructions; and every man was prepared to embark at the first signal.¹ When it is considered that lord Nelson fell into the enemy's snare, and that this mighty combination was frustrated by the accidental encounter of Sir Robert Calder with Villeneuve, it must be confessed that the safety of Great Britain was in considerable jeopardy.

Activity of
Nelson.

At this time his lordship was in the Mediterranean; and while at anchor off Sardinia, received intelligence that the Toulon fleet had sailed on the eighteenth of January: he instantly weighed; and after beating about the Sicilian seas for ten days in search of the enemy, ran for Egypt, under an impression that they were bound for that country: baffled in his pursuit, and grievously disappointed, he then bore up for Malta; and receiving intelligence that the French fleet had put back to Toulon, he proceeded to the gulf of Lyons, where he encountered such tempestuous weather, that on the twenty-seventh of February he was obliged to anchor in the gulf of Cagliari: another severe gale on the eighth of March drove him for shelter into the bay of Palma, which he made his rendezvous: thinking that the enemy had some object in the Mediterranean, and wishing to draw them into a belief that he was stationed on the Spanish coast, he next made his appearance off Barcelona; but without effect: at length, he received intelligence that Villeneuve had put to sea on the last day of March, with eleven ships of the line, and seven frigates; and, when last seen, was steering toward the coast of Africa. Still adhering to his first impression regarding his adversary's destination, he covered the

¹ See Ney's Memoirs, vol. ii. p. 259, &c.

channel between Sardinia and Barbary, so as to be certain the French armament was not taking that route to Egypt; and when this was clear, he bore up on the seventh of April for Palermo, and despatched cruisers in all directions, lest it should pass to the north of Corsica: at length, feeling assured that it was not gone toward the Levant, he did all that a provident and able commander could do: despatching frigates to Gibraltar, to Lisbon, and to admiral Cornwallis off Brest, he beat up against contrary winds, and arrived in sight of Gibraltar on the thirtieth; but being unable to pass through the straits by reason of a strong westerly gale, he anchored off the Barbary shore, and obtained supplies from Tetuan.

In the mean time, Villeneuve had hastened on to Cadiz; and sir John Orde, who commanded the blockading squadron, prudently retired at his approach: admiral Gravina, with six Spanish and two French ships of the line, there joined him; and the united squadrons, consisting of eighteen line-of-battle ships, six frigates of forty-four guns each, and four smaller vessels, set sail for the West Indies; being met in their passage by two new French ships of the line, and a forty-four gun frigate. The combined squadron had 4500 troops on board, under the command of general Lauriston; while 1600 more waited their arrival at Martinique and Guadaloupe; for it was a kind of underplot in Napoleon's grand scheme, to carry by a *coup de main* those of our West Indian islands which might be found unprepared for defence. Nelson, having discovered their place of destination, set sail with ten sail of the line and three frigates; observing to his officers, with that characteristic valor and confidence which seemed to chain victory to our navy;—'Take you each a Frenchman, and leave the Spaniards to me: when I haul down my colors, I expect you to do the same.'

The enemy had five and thirty days' start; but the British admiral calculated that he should gain eight or ten days on them by his exertions: on the

CHAP.
XLVII.

1805.

fourteenth of June he reached Barbados, whither he had sent despatches before him, and found there admiral Cochrane with two ships of the line; the rest of our West Indian squadron being at Jamaica: he also received accounts that the combined fleets had been seen from St. Lucie on the twenty-eighth, standing for the southward; and that Tobago and Trinidad were their objects: Nelson himself doubted this; but he stood alone in his opinion, and yielded it with these foreboding words;—‘If your intelligence proves false, you lose me the French fleet.’

Having sailed for Tobago, he found that he had been misled; and thence, being deceived again by false intelligence, he sailed for Trinidad; but no enemy was there: he then bore up for Grenada, where he arrived on the ninth; and learned that the French fleet had passed to leeward of Antigua the preceding day, and taken a homeward-bound convoy: without this intervention of false intelligence, on which Nelson reluctantly acted, he would, says his biographer, have been off Port Royal just as the enemy was leaving it; and the battle would have been fought on the spot where Rodney defeated De Grasse: this he remembered in his vexation; but he saved the colonies and above 200 ships laden for Europe, whither he had reason to believe his foes were now flying in terror of his name: accordingly, for Europe he steered in pursuit of them; and, on the nineteenth of July, anchored at Gibraltar, where he went on shore, for the first time since June, 1803. He now held communication with his old friend, admiral Collingwood; who, with a detached squadron, had taken a station off Cadiz, to prevent any progress of the Spaniards; and who had divined the enemy's intention, or at least a part of it, supposing Ireland to be their ultimate object: in pursuance of which, he suspected that they intended to liberate the Ferrol squadron, blockaded by sir Robert Calder; call for the ships at Rochefort; then appear with about thirty-four sail off Ushant; and, being joined by the Brest fleet, proceed to Ireland: he considered their flight to the West Indies as merely undertaken to draw off

Nelson's fleet, which was the great impediment to their design.²

CHAP.
XLVII.

1805.

Napoleon thought that the British admiral, deceived by false reports, inserted in journals and spread over Europe by his agents, had proceeded to the East Indies; and it seems that Nelson himself was inclined to take that route,³ before he met with his friend, who, in political penetration, was not surpassed by any statesman of that age. As yet however all was conjecture; and his lordship having again victualled and watered his fleet at Tetuan, proceeded toward Cape St. Vincent, cruising for intelligence to the northward, but without success. Still persevering, and still disappointed, he returned to Cadiz; when, ascertaining that the enemy was not there, he traversed the Bay of Biscay, and steered for the north-west coast of Ireland: but, frustrated in all his hopes, after a pursuit, which, for extent, rapidity, and perseverance, is scarcely to be paralleled, he judged it best to reinforce the channel fleet; lest the French, as Collingwood supposed, should bear down for Brest with their collected force. On the fifteenth of August, he joined admiral Cornwallis off Ushant; but no news of the enemy having been obtained, he received orders the same evening to proceed, with the Victory and Superb, to Portsmouth.

There however Nelson received intelligence of the combined fleet: sir Robert Calder, having been sent out to intercept their return, had fallen in with them on the twenty-second of July, sixty leagues west of Cape Finisterre; his force consisting only of fifteen ships of the line and two frigates: but with this he boldly attacked twenty-seven sail of the line, three of

Action
of sir R.
Calder.

² It has since been seen that Napoleon's instructions to Villeneuve accorded with these ideas of admiral Collingwood: a squadron was to land 18,000 men to the north of the bay of Lough-swilly; then, passing round Scotland, to appear off Boulogne, or to go to the Texel, where they would find seven Dutch sail of the line and 27,000 men, which they were to take back to Ireland. 'Une des deux questions,' he observes, 'doit réussir; et alors que j'aie trente ou quarante mille hommes en Irlande, soit que je sois en Angleterre ou en Irlande, le gain de la guerre sera pour nous. Si votre présence nous rend maîtres de la mer pendant trois jours devant Boulogne, nous avons toute faculté de faire notre expédition, composée de 160,000 hommes, embarqués sur deux mille bâtimens.'—See Life of Collingwood, vol. i. p. 144.

³ See a letter, dated July 20th, in the Life of Collingwood, vol. i. p. 143.

fifty guns, and five frigates; and succeeded, after a glorious combat of four hours, in capturing two of their line, and defeating the greatest and best combined project ever formed by the master mind of Napoleon. Sir Robert thought it necessary to bring to his squadron, for the purpose of securing the prizes, in the midst of a dense fog; after which, the hostile fleets remained in sight of each other till the twenty-sixth, when Villeneuve bore away under easy sail to the south-east; and, as marshal Ney has observed,⁴ 'when the troops at Boulogne flattered themselves that the French fleet would speedily arrive to protect their embarkation, they learned that the admiral, deterred by a cannonade of a few hours, and the loss of two ships, had sought refuge in Ferrol: a mournful feeling took possession of their minds; and every one complained that a man should be so immeasurably below his destiny. Hope, however, was not yet lost; for the emperor still retained it: accordingly he continued his dispositions, and incessantly urged the advance of the marine. All flattered themselves, that Villeneuve, penetrated with the greatness of his mission, would at length put to sea, join Ganthaume, disperse Cornwallis's fleet, and at length make his appearance in the channel: but an unhappy fatality drew him on; he only left Ferrol to throw himself into Cadiz; and it was in vain to reckon on his support: the emperor tried other expedients; and made repeated attempts to embark; but nothing could succeed for want of the covering squadron.' It is melancholy to reflect on the fate of that gallant officer, who had dispersed this naval force, and together with it the mighty scheme of Bonaparte: sir R. Calder was soon afterwards brought to a court-martial, and severely reprimanded for a victory, which, before the era of Nelson, would have ensured him a coronet: in the mean time, Villeneuve had retired from Ferrol, brought out the squadron from that port, and with it entered the harbor of Cadiz.⁵ It was not long before

⁴ See his Memoirs, vol. ii. p. 262.

⁵ When informed of this by captain Blackwood, Nelson repeatedly said,—'Depend on it, Blackwood, I shall yet give M. Villeneuve a drabbing.'

Nelson again offered his services to the admiralty, which were joyfully accepted; when lord Barham, giving him the navy list, desired him to choose his own officers. 'Choose yourself, my lord,' was his reply: 'the same spirit actuates the whole profession, and you cannot choose wrong:' he was then requested to name what ships he required in addition to the fleet which he was about to command; and these would be ordered to follow him with all possible expedition. No appointment was ever made more in unison with the feelings of the nation: Nelson considered the enemy's ships, which he had so steadily pursued, as his own game; the fair price and reward of his long toil and incessant anxiety: the country thought so too; at Portsmouth, it was with extreme difficulty that a way could be made for him to the beach through the crowds collected to obtain a sight of the national hero: 'many,' says his biographer, 'were in tears; and many knelt down before him, to bless him as he passed: all men knew that his heart was as humane as it was fearless; that there was not in his nature an alloy of selfishness or cupidity; but that he served his country with a perfect and intire devotion: therefore they loved him as truly and fervently as he loved England.'⁶

CHAP.
XLVII.

1805.

Nelson
appointed
to the
command.

In the mean time, the other part of Napoleon's grand scheme approached its development: being certified of the nature and extent of the coalition formed against him, he hastened to secure the co-operation of Bavaria by the promise of an aggrandisement of its territory; in consequence of which, Austria advanced her troops, peremptorily requiring the elector to join the imperial standard: on his evading this request, and withdrawing his army, the Austrian forces were ordered to occupy Munich. Here was an aggression which Bonaparte anxiously desired: he could now give up without disgrace the vaunted expedition against England; whose cabinet, by precipitating Austria prematurely into hostilities, had precisely served the purpose of its adversary: he affected great disappoint-

Conquests
of Napo-
leon in
Bavaria.

⁶ Southey's Life of Nelson.

CHAP.
XI.VII.

1805.

Surrender
of Ulm.

ment in abandoning his scheme of invasion; but instantly dictated to his generals a masterly plan for a continental campaign, apparently the offspring of inspiration, but in fact the result of long and mature reflection. He now suddenly turned his innumerable legions against the devoted territory of Austria; and the Germans, with a national forgetfulness of the value of promptitude, calculated his march at ten miles a day; but Napoleon effected thirty! their troops were caught moving, regiment by regiment, from their dépôts; they were attacked in fragments; and enveloped, squadron and battalion, in the rushing masses of the French cavalry. By some infatuation, the emperor Francis placed the pedantic tactician, Mack, in command of an advanced army of 80,000 men; and with this he had taken post at Ulm, thinking that Bonaparte must necessarily follow the same route which Moreau had formerly taken: but the French emperor had divided his immense army into seven different corps; an overwhelming force was in the rear of Mack before he dreamed of it; and retreat became impossible: instead however of falling back on the Austrian reserves, and attacking one or other of the French corps, he scattered his troops around Ulm; and being beaten on every side, shut himself up with about 20,000 men in that city: but the French occupied all the heights around; and Mack, whose brain was in as great a confusion as his army, had no resource left except to capitulate. An imperial bulletin then announced the capture of 60,000 prisoners, 200 pieces of cannon, and eighty stands of colors, in a campaign of fifteen days: 'but another,' it said, 'awaits us; for we have to combat the Russians, whom England has transported from the end of the universe; the next battle will decide the honor of the French infantry, and will tell whether it be the first or the second in Europe.'

While he thus addressed his own soldiers, his discourse to the Austrian generals that were prisoners showed on what field he was still anxious to triumph — 'let your master,' he said, 'hasten to make peace

I want nothing on the continent: it is commerce, colonies, and ships that I want; and my conquest of them would be as beneficial to you as to me.' These words were spoken on the twentieth of October, the day of the surrender of Ulm: the next sun shone upon the battle of Trafalgar; where Nelson, annihilating all Napoleon's hopes of maritime supremacy, proved to him, that if France was invincible on land, her great rival was equally so on the ocean.

CHAP.
XLVII.
1805.

When Villeneuve retired from the port of Ferrol, with thirty-six men-of-war, he found admiral Collingwood cruising off Cadiz with three line-of-battle ships, a frigate, and a bomb-vessel: the skill with which the latter conducted his small squadron in the presence of so vast a force, excited much admiration at the time, and elicited great praise from Nelson, whose anxiety was extreme, lest the enemy's fleet should be lost sight of. Being followed by sixteen large ships, Collingwood kept just out of gun-shot, on the edge of the current; and determined that his pursuers should not drive him through the straits of Gibraltar unless they followed him. As soon as they perceived his object, they tacked; when the British ships tacked after them: and this occurred more than once; until, at length, the enemy made all sail for Cadiz, followed by that small British squadron, which arrived off the harbor before half of them had got in, and resumed the blockade. As soon as our admiral was reinforced, he extended the blockade in its utmost strictness to all the ports lying between Cadiz and Algesiras; a measure, to which the ultimate sailing of the combined fleets may be attributed: Napoleon had caused large quantities of biscuit and other stores to be collected at Brest, Ferrol, and Rochefort; but never contemplating the possibility of his armament being turned to the southward, and forced to enter Cadiz, he had made no provision at that port for so large a force.

Manœuvres of Collingwood.

Nelson arrived off Cadiz the twenty-ninth of September; and on that very day, Villeneuve had received orders to put to sea on the first opportunity: our admiral

Villeneuve puts to sea.

CHAP.
XLVII.

1805.

did not suffer his flag to be saluted; but took every precaution to keep his arrival secret, as well as the numerical force of his fleet; and having chosen a station about fifty miles west, near Cape St. Mary, he hoped to decoy the enemy out, while he avoided all danger of being caught by a westerly wind, and driven into the straits: the blockade of the coast was strictly enforced; and captain Blackwood, in the *Euryalus*, who was afterwards joined by four more frigates and a brig, was stationed on the look-out, in order that the enemy might not escape: and such was the vigilance and conduct of that excellent officer, that no movements of the combined fleet ever escaped him; but all were instantly signified by telegraph to the commander-in-chief.

Prepara-
tions for an
engage-
ment.

In the mean time, Nelson, as usual, prepared his plan of attack, so far as he could venture to guess at the position in which the enemy would be found, and sent it to Collingwood, who had removed his flag from the *Dreadnought* into the *Royal Sovereign*. The order of battle was to be nearly that of sailing, in two lines, with an advanced squadron of eight fast-sailing two-deckers: the second in command, having the intire direction of his line, was to break through the enemy, about the twelfth ship from their rear: Nelson himself would lead through the centre, and the advanced squadron was to cut off three or four ahead of it. This plan of his commander and friend received Collingwood's cordial approbation; for he had long thought that to act with a large number of ships in one line, was a positive disadvantage, both in loss of time and application of power.⁷ Nelson, calling his admirals and captains together, observed to them, that as they knew his precise object to be a close and decisive action, this knowlege would supply any deficiency of signals, and they would act accordingly: his concluding remark is truly worthy of record:—'In case signals cannot be seen or clearly understood, no captain can do wrong, if he places his ship alongside that of an enemy.'

⁷ *Life of Lord Collingwood*, vol. i. p. 156.

At half-past nine on the morning of the nineteenth, signal was made by the Mars, 'that the enemy were coming out of port;' at three, 'that their fleet was at sea:' on the morning of the twentieth, Nelson's favorite old ship, the *Agamemnon*, captain sir Edward Berry,⁸ which had been stationed as one of the in-shore squadron expressly to convey intelligence, approached very near to the enemy's fleet, and counted thirty sail of the line: this number was reported to the admiral; who, in his anxiety lest they should escape during the night, which promised darkness and squalls, made the following telegraphic signal to the *Euryalus* toward the close of the day:—'I rely on you that I do not miss the enemy.' They were observed so well, that every motion was reported; and as they wore twice, it was inferred that they were aiming to keep the port of Cadiz open, and would retreat thither as soon as they saw the British fleet; Nelson was careful, therefore, not to approach near enough to be seen by them during the night. At daybreak, the combined fleets, consisting of thirty-three sail of the line and seven large frigates, were distinctly seen ahead, in a close line of battle, on the starboard tack, about twelve miles to leeward, and standing to the south: the British admiral had with him only twenty-seven sail of the line and four frigates; six of the line, under admiral Louis, having been despatched to Gibraltar for provisions and water: the enemy's superiority was even greater in the size of ships and weight of metal than in numbers: they had also 4000 troops aboard; and numerous Tyrolese riflemen were dispersed among the crews. Soon after daylight on the twenty-first, Nelson, coming on deck, called captain Blackwood on board the *Victory*, who remained with him upwards of five hours, and only departed when the enemy had opened their fire: the admiral's last

⁸ This gallant officer rejoined his chief, after an almost miraculous escape from the Rochefort squadron, and having saved his ship by his skilful manœuvres, on the twelfth of October. When the *Agamemnon* was reported by the signal officer of the *Victory*, Nelson was at table, and observed to his guests, with unusual glee, —'Here comes Berry: now we shall have a battle.'—See *United Service Journal*, No. XXIX. p. 510.

CHAP.
XLVII.

1805.

Battle of
Trafalgar.

words to him were,—‘God bless you, Blackwood; I shall never see you more.’ This presentiment had been long fixed in his mind, but it neither depressed his spirits, nor daunted his courage.

The combined fleets, having steered to the northward, formed their line on the larboard tack; bringing the shoals of Trafalgar and San Pedro under the lee of the British, and keeping the port of Cadiz open for retreat. Villeneuve was a very skilful seaman, and his plan of defence was admirably conceived; his fleet being formed in a double crescent, and every alternate ship being about a cable’s length to windward of her second ahead and astern: so that there appeared but very small intervals between them, though the ships were not crowded. Nelson made signal for the British fleet to bear up in two columns; himself leading the weather division, and Collingwood the lee: his last signal, ‘England expects every man to do his duty,’ was then made, and received with three hearty cheers by every ship in the fleet. ‘Now,’ said this heroic man, ‘I can do no more: we must trust to the Great Disposer of all events, and to the justice of our cause: I thank God for this grand opportunity of doing my duty.’ The enemy waited for the attack with uncommon firmness, and seemed no less inspired than their opponents, with a determination to conquer or to perish. As the weather division steered about two points more to the north than that of Collingwood, in order to cut off their opponents from Cadiz, the lee squadron was first engaged: viewing therefore the Royal Sovereign, as she advanced with every sail set to cut through the adverse line about the twelfth from the rear, astern of the Santa Anna, and as she engaged that huge three-decker at the muzzle of her guns on the starboard side, Nelson cried out,—‘See how that noble fellow, Collingwood, carries his ship into action: how I envy him!’ while Collingwood, delighted at being first in the heat of the fire, and knowing the feelings of his friend, turned to his captain, and exclaimed;—‘Rotherham, what would Nelson give to be here!’ The nearest of the English ships at this time was about

a mile from the Royal Sovereign, which was rushing alone into the midst of the enemy's fleet: the Fougueux, next astern to the huge Santa Anna, now closed up, to prevent her foe from going through the line; when Collingwood ordered his ship to be steered so as to carry away the Frenchman's bowsprit: to avoid this, the Fougueux backed her main-topsail, and suffered the British ship to pass; at the same time opening her fire; while the Royal Sovereign poured a broadside and a half into the stern of the Santa Anna, tearing it down, and killing or wounding 400 of her men: then, with her helm hard a-starboard, she ranged up alongside so closely, that the lower yards of the two vessels were locked together. The Spanish admiral, seeing that Collingwood's intention was to engage him to leeward, had collected all his strength on the starboard; and such was the weight of the Santa Anna's metal, that her first broadside made her adversary heel two streaks out of the water:⁹ the Fougueux then placed herself on the Royal Sovereign's lee quarter, and three other ships, one French and two Spanish, on her bow; a number probably greater than could fire at a single ship without injuring each other: the admiral then directed his marines to be removed from the poop, though he remained there himself much longer; at length, descending to the quarter-deck, he visited and encouraged the men, enjoining them not to fire a shot wastefully, looking himself along the guns to see that they were properly pointed. The Fougueux at one time got so much on the quarter of her antagonist, that she almost touched, when the quarter-deck carronades were brought to bear on her; and after receiving several double-shotted guns in her forecastle, she dropped a little astern; where, out of reach, she kept up a raking fire, till the Tonnant came up and engaged her.¹⁰

While the commander-in-chief was leading down his column, the enemy continued to fire single guns at

⁹ See Life of Collingwood, vol. i. p. 172.

¹⁰ There is a diversity of opinion regarding the exact time, during which Collingwood was engaged alone with the French fleet: he himself considered it twenty minutes, though others believe that it considerably exceeded that space.

CHAP.
XLVII.

1805.

the Victory, until they saw a shot pass through her maintop-gallant sail : they then opened their broadsides, aiming chiefly at the rigging, with a hope of disabling her before she could come to close conflict. Nelson, as usual, had hoisted several flags, lest one might be shot away; but the enemy showed no colours till late in the action, when it became necessary to have them in order to strike: hence the admiral could only recognise his old acquaintance, as he used to call her, the Santissima Trinidad, by her four decks; and toward her bow he ordered the Victory to be steered. In the mean time, Mr. Scott, his secretary, was killed; captain Hardy was slightly wounded on the foot; and fifty of the ship's crew were put *hors de combat*, before she returned a shot: at four minutes after twelve, she opened her fire from both sides of her deck, breaking through the line at about the tenth ship from the van, and running on board the Redoubtable: thus the enemy's van was left unoccupied; while the succeeding ships broke through in all parts, astern of their leaders, and engaged the enemy at the muzzles of their guns. As captain Harvey in the *Téméraire* fell on board the Redoubtable on the other side, and another enemy was in like manner on board the *Téméraire*, these four ships formed as compact a tier as if they had been moored together: the lieutenants of the Victory, seeing this, very judiciously depressed their guns, and fired with a diminished charge, lest their shot might pass through and injure the *Téméraire*: also because there was danger of the Redoubtable taking fire from the flashes of their guns, the fireman of each stood ready with a bucket of water; which, as soon as the piece was discharged, he dashed into the hole made by the shot. Always humane, even in the midst of battle, Nelson twice gave orders that his fire on the Redoubtable should cease; supposing she had struck, because her great guns were silent, and she carried no flag; but from this ship, which he had thus spared, he received his mortal wound = her tops, like all the others, were filled with riflemen =

and a ball from her mizen-top, not more than fifteen yards from the spot where he stood, struck him on the left shoulder, about a quarter after one, in the very heat of the action: he fell on his face in the blood of his poor secretary; but though mortally wounded, his presence of mind did not forsake him; for as he was carried down the ladder, he observed the tiller-ropes shot away, and ordered new ones to be rove immediately: then, that he might not be seen by the crew, he covered his face and stars with his handkerchief. When placed in the cockpit, he felt the hand of death upon him, and insisted that the surgeon should go and attend to other wounded men; merely requiring some lemonade to alleviate his intense thirst. Though he was in great pain, he expressed extreme anxiety about the result of the action, which now began to manifest itself by the hurras of the crew, as each ship of the enemy struck her flag; and when to his eager inquiries, 'How many had surrendered?' he was told, 'Fourteen or fifteen at least;' he replied to captain Hardy, 'That's well; but I bargained for twenty.' He then asked,—'What have you done, Hardy?' to which the captain replied—'I have sent to admiral Collingwood, my lord, to inform him that you are wounded, and to request that he would make the necessary signals.'—'Not whilst I am alive,' said Nelson, with energy; 'not whilst I am alive: anchor, Hardy, anchor:' but this order could not be obeyed. The Redoubtable struck within twenty minutes after he had received his fatal wound; having been twice in flames, and preserved by her adversaries. The fire of Nelson's ship was so tremendous, that many of the crew of her enormous antagonist, the Santissima Trinidad, leaped overboard, and, swimming to the Victory, were helped up her sides by the British tars luring the action: but though the Spaniards began the battle with less vivacity than the French, they continued it with greater firmness; two of their ships, the Argonauta and Bahama, being defended till they had lost 400 men each, and the St. Juan Nepamuceno 340: the Santa Anna struck at half-past two o'clock,

CHAP.
XLVII

1805.

about the time when the news of Nelson's wound was communicated to the vice-admiral; but the Royal Sovereign had been so much injured in her masts and yards by the ships that lay on her bow and quarter, that she was unable to alter her position; and the prize was taken in tow by the Euryalus frigate. The decisive superiority of British seamen over those of France was never more conspicuous: five of our ships were engaged muzzle to muzzle with five of the French line; and in all of them, the Frenchmen closed their lower deck ports and deserted their guns; while our men continued calmly to load and fire until victory was secure: according to the confession however of admiral Collingwood, in his despatches, the enemy's ships were fought with a gallantry highly honorable to their officers; but about three o'clock, P.M., many having struck their colors, their line gave way; and admiral Gravina, with ten ships, joining their frigates, stood back toward Cadiz. Nelson lived to know how decisive was his victory; and the last guns fired were from four of the enemy's van, all French, under rear-admiral Dumanoir: they had borne no part in the action; and now, when seeking safety in flight, they fired not only into the Victory and Royal Sovereign, as they passed; but, with that republican ferocity which had not yet departed from the national character, poured broadsides into the captured vessels of their Spanish allies: nay, they were even seen to back their topsails for the purpose of firing with greater precision.¹¹ Soon after the perpetration of this base action, Nelson's gallant spirit fled; and his last words, faintly articulated, were, 'Thank God, I have done my duty.'

Death of
Nelson.

¹¹ This fact, which must hand Dumanoir's name down to posterity as a monster, is related on the authority of Mr. Southey, in his *Life of Nelson*; who observes that the indignation of the Spanish prisoners was so great at this murderous conduct, that when, two days after the battle, seven ships came out of Cadiz, in hope of retaking some of the disabled prizes, the Spaniards offered their services to fight with the British against any French ships. Captain Internet, one of the officers of the French fleet, prisoner at Reading, informed Dr. Valpy, in the presence of his brother officers, that he saw two signals flying; one from Dumanoir to follow him in his flight; the other from the commander-in-chief to join him: as he considered himself bound to obey the latter, he bore up, and engaged till his ship sank.

Admiral Collingwood now succeeded to the command of the fleet, and distinguished himself no less by his skill and prudence after the victory, than by his undaunted bravery in the action. The noble exertions of our countrymen, whose total loss of men in this battle was 1587, were rewarded by the capture of nineteen of the enemy's ships, with their commander in chief, Villeneuve, and two Spanish admirals: the *Achille*, a French seventy-four, blew up, after her surrender, through the negligence of her own crew, of whom 200 were saved by our tenders. The Spanish vice-admiral Alava died of his wounds; but Villeneuve was sent to England; whence he was allowed, at his own imprudent request, and against the earnest advice of his friends, to return to France: confident in the rectitude of his intentions and the honor of his conduct, he determined to proceed; and the French government declared, that, being in dread of a court-martial, he put a period to his own existence. Bonaparte, at St. Helena, strongly denied all agency in this mysterious affair; and gave a minute account of the manner in which the unfortunate admiral proceeded in the work of self-destruction; adding, 'he need not have done it, as he was a brave man, though possessed of no talent.'¹²

After the action, Collingwood shifted his flag to the *Euryalus*, that he might more easily communicate orders to the fleet, and collect his ships. The whole, as he observes in his despatches, were now in a very perilous situation; many dismasted, all shattered, in thirteen fathom water off the shoals of Trafalgar; and when he made the signal to anchor, few had an anchor to let go, their cables having been cut by the enemy's shot: but the same good Providence, which aided them through the day, preserved them in the night; the wind shifting a few points, and drifting the vessels off the land: the gale however coming on from the

Results of
the action.

¹² See 'A Voice from St. Helena,' vol. i. p. 56. The agents of his government are not considered free from this stain: there does not however seem to be any reason for accusing Napoleon of the crime, since nothing could have been more easy for him than to have brought the admiral to a court-martial; and who can doubt the result, with the instance of the duc d'Enghien before him?

CHAP.
XLVII.

1806.

south-west, increased next day, and continued to the twenty-fifth with a steadiness rarely witnessed: till the twenty-third, however, they lost only one of their prizes, the Redoubtable: but during the twenty-fourth and the following night, they were in the most imminent danger; almost all the ships being terribly crippled, yet having dismasted vessels in tow; their crews also tired out, with many thousands of prisoners to guard, while a violent gale blew right on the shore. At length, they were obliged to destroy most of their prizes, among which were the huge Santissima Trinidad, and the Santa Anna; nor was it without indefatigable exertions and uncommon skill, that four could be saved and carried into Gibraltar. On the afternoon of the twenty-third, the remnant of the enemy's fleet, consisting of ten ships, which had not been much engaged, came out of harbor, and stood to leeward, in hopes of cutting off the shattered vessels of which the British were in charge: this obliged the admiral to collect a force out of his least injured ships, and form to leeward; when he finally determined to destroy what he saw no chance of saving; and even this was a very difficult task, as the sea was running mountains high; to the honor however of British seamanship, not one of our own ships was lost under such unparalleled circumstances.

Honors
paid to the
memory of
Nelson.

Thus ended the greatest naval victory recorded in our history. Every honor which a grateful country could bestow was now heaped on the memory of Nelson: his brother was made an earl, with a grant of £6000 a year; £10,000 were voted to each of his sisters; and £100,000 for the purchase of an estate: a public funeral, with a splendid monument in St. Paul's, was decreed; statues, columns, and other monuments, were voted in most of our principal cities: but the people of England almost forgot their joy at a victory which annihilated the French navy, in grieving that posthumous honors alone were all that could be awarded to him, who was peculiarly 'the hero of England.'

The survivors received the thanks of both houses

of parliament: gold medals were distributed among those officers who had distinguished themselves; and never was the dignity of a baron of this united kingdom more worthily bestowed than on vice-admiral Collingwood: he also received a pension of £2000 per annum for his own life, and that of his two next heirs; beside which, he was gratified by the express approbation of his majesty, conveyed through the secretary of the admiralty; as well as by a kind letter, and gift of a sword, from the duke of Clarence.

CHAP.
XLVII.
1805.

The four French ships under Dumanoir, which ran southward at the close of the action, soon shared the fate of their companions: on the night of the second of November, rear-admiral sir Richard Strachan, cruising off Ferrol, with an equal number of ships of the line and three frigates, gave chase to those base fugitives, which he took at first for the Rochefort squadron: a little before noon on the fourth, he came to close action; and after a hard contest, all the French ships, having been rendered unmanageable, struck to the British flag: thus was the naval power of France reduced to insignificance; those phantoms of 'ships, colonies, and commerce,' which floated over Napoleon's imagination, were utterly dispersed; and Great Britain was left without a rival on the ocean.

Bonaparte however was soon left without a rival on the continent. After the surrender of Ulm, he reconducted the Bavarian monarch to his capital, and entered Austria, where his generals drove all before them as they advanced: on the fifteenth of November he entered Vienna, whence the Austrian emperor and his troops had retired into Moravia; for the Russians, whom Mack expected at Ulm, had as yet only arrived at Brunn. Napoleon, who had gained possession of the bridge over the Danube by the extraordinary audacity of marshal Lannes, advanced and occupied that city, while the two emperors of Russia and Austria rallied at Olmutz: they were at the head of 80,000 men, but the French did not exceed 60,000; for their emperor had been obliged to garrison Vienna, and leave troops to watch the archduke Charles in South

Advance of
Napoleon.

CHAP.
XLVII.

1805.

Austria; who, though pressed by Massena, was still in force: a battle however now became a matter of absolute necessity to Napoleon, being so far advanced in an enemy's country, with Prussia also irritated and assuming a menacing attitude. The French, in their rapid march to intercept Mack, had passed through the Prussian territory of Anspach, and thus gave a pretext for hostilities: an envoy had actually arrived from Berlin; but the emperor requested him to keep back his message, until the battle, which was at hand, should be decided. On the twenty-seventh of November the combined armies advanced against the invaders, who were concentrated to the eastward of Brunn: Napoleon, who had studied well the ground in his rear, retired before them, and drew back his right wing more than the rest of his army; when Kutusoff, imagining this to be a sign of weakness, resolved to turn that wing, in the hope of intercepting a retreat on Vienna. Thus it was that Bonaparte, by drawing his troops, as near as prudence permitted, to one point, and exhibiting indications of timidity, weakness, and retreat, suggested to his enemies the dangerous experiment of extending their lines, and exposing their weak parts to the attack of an overwhelming force. On the first of December the combined armies fell into this snare: their chief forces were pushed toward the extreme left, while the rest were diminished for that purpose on the heights in front, which Napoleon had purposely neglected to occupy; and which, being intersected by ravines, favored his project of cutting the Austrian line, when sufficiently weakened by extending itself to take the French army in flank. His acute eye watched their motions in advance of Austerlitz; and he exclaimed, 'You will be at our mercy before the setting of to-morrow's sun.' That morrow was the anniversary of his coronation; and his soldiers,—to whom he communicated his confidence of success and the reasons of it, in a bulletin—promised him the Russian cannon and standards in honor of his fête.

Before the close of the day, on the first, a firing

commenced against the right wing of the French, which was their menaced point; and thither Napoleon hastened to make his dispositions for the morrow. Soult commanded this division, though Davoust had a corps still farther to the right, to prevent the enemy from taking them in the rear: Bernadotte commanded in the centre, and Lannes on the left; Murat with the cavalry being stationed behind them: Bessières was in reserve, with Oudinot and the guard. On the second, the sun, rising in unclouded brilliancy, discovered the combined Austrian and Russian armies, ranged on, around, and behind the heights of Pratzen; while the allied emperors occupied the village of Austerlitz, to watch the efforts of their soldiers.

CHAP.
XLVII.
1805.
Battle of
Austerlitz.

The grand attack, as Napoleon expected, commenced on his right, which Soult and Davoust, who were very advantageously stationed in flooded marshy ground, supported with uncommon resolution and skill: the best, both of soldiers and commanders, were required to sustain the impetuosity of the advancing masses; while Napoleon, fearing lest these troops should be recalled, delayed to make his meditated assault on the weakened line with his combined left and centre. At length, being certified that the left of his adversaries was completely engaged, he advanced with his main force, the greater part of which had been kept studiously concealed, as the allied columns were descending from the heights, still in the direction of their left, where they expected the brunt of the battle to take place. Surprised, and attacked during an oblique march, like the army of Marmont in a subsequent period at Salamanca, they were divided, routed, and separated one part from the other; while Napoleon's troops gained the heights, and came in sight of the Russian corps of reserve, stationed before Austerlitz. The French skirmishers and cavalry instantly charged amongst them; but the emperor Alexander, aided by general Kutusoff, rallied his guards; with which and several other regiments, he met his opponents with irresistible impetuosity: the French, so lately victorious, were driven back: even their hollow squares

were broken, and all was on the point of ruin; when Napoleon, from whom Austerlitz was hidden by the heights, caught sounds of ill omen, and instantly despatched his chief aide-de-camp, with all the cavalry that could be mustered, to inspect affairs, and act according to their exigency: Rapp galloped off, rallying stragglers as he proceeded; and, when he came up, saw his countrymen in broken squares, sabred without mercy by the victorious Russians. Encouraging his men 'to avenge their comrades, and restore the day,' he gallantly attacked the enemy at full speed; gave the infantry time to recover their order, and to form; when all returned to the charge, and, after a terrible carnage, utterly routed the Russian guards in the presence of their autocrat: this splendid feat achieved, Rapp rode back, with broken sword and bleeding front, to acquaint the emperor, that his foes in the direction of Austerlitz were driven off the field and in full flight.¹³ In all other quarters success had been secured; and the left of the allies, on which they had built their hopes, was at the mercy of the victors: it had already suffered dreadful losses, when Soult, who, like Wellington at Waterloo, had sustained every attack unbroken to the last, finally advanced; and then one of those hideous incidents occurred, which render war more like the work of demons than of men. A division of the Russian army, mistaking its way, as it retired before the French, was gradually forced, by Soult's progress, on a large extent of smooth space covered with snow: this was found to be a frozen lake; and the French, halting at its edge, commenced a heavy fire of artillery, not on the unfortunate Russians, but on the ice; which, loaded as it was with horses, men, and guns, gave way under the cannonade; and in a moment the whole division was engulfed: Napoleon, who had just galloped to the spot, exulted in the appalling spectacle,¹⁴ and applauded the act: at night-fall, the rest of the Russian troops retreated on Boscovitz, covered by the Austrian cavalry.

¹³ Gerard's celebrated picture of the battle designates this point of time.

¹⁴ See *Memoirs of Marshal Soult*.

This battle, which left 15,000 Russians and Austrians slain on the field, as well as 20,000 prisoners, forty standards, and two *parcs* of artillery in the hands of the French, terminated the campaign. The Austrian emperor, dismayed at his losses, solicited an interview with Napoleon; and this led to an armistice, by which, among other conditions, the French were to retain possession of all their conquests till a definitive peace, or the recommencement of hostilities should take place; which latter was not to be before the expiration of fourteen days. The Russian autocrat refusing to become a party to this convention, withdrew his army on the sixth of December toward his own dominions; while Napoleon showed considerable forbearance with Austria, but exhibited against Prussia all that indignation which he had previously stifled: when count Haugwitz, who, before the battle, was prepared to use menacing language, now complimented him on his success, the emperor replied,—‘this, sir, is a congratulation, of which fortune has changed the address:’ then railing vehemently against treachery and false friends, he so terrified the Prussian envoy, that he consented to conclude a treaty, engaging his court to resign Anspach and Bareuth, and accept Hanover in return: thus was Napoleon’s object, to set England and Prussia at variance, completely gained. This latter power required the assistance of the former, conjointly with that of Russia, in case of attack; and both arrangements were utterly incompatible: Hardenburg endeavored to draw his cabinet out of the difficulty, by accepting Hanover as a *dépot*, and yielding Anspach and Bareuth, with Cleves, Berg, and Neufchatel; which two latter principalities were subsequently conferred on Murat and Berthier.

A definitive treaty was signed on the twenty-sixth of December at Presburg, by which Austria not only ceded to the French empire those Italian states that were already incorporated with it, or administered by French laws, as Piedmont, Parma, and Piacenza; but resigned all possessions acquired from Venice, including Dalmatia, to the Italian kingdom: at the same

Treaty of
Presburg.

CHAP.
XLVII.

1805.

time she recognised Napoleon's imperial title. The elector of Bavaria and the duke of Wurtemberg were now raised to the rank of kings; and their dominions, as well as those of the elector of Baden, were augmented by acquisitions from the humbled Austria; who in return obtained only Salzburg and Berchtolsgaden as a duchy, the hereditary presidency of the secularised Teutonic order, and a guarantee from France for the integrity of her remaining empire: thus was a new and important step made by Napoleon toward universal dominion. The power of Austria, deprived of nearly 3,000,000 of her subjects, and £1,600,000 of annual revenue, was at length broken; whilst, her bulwarks of the Tyrol and Venice being destroyed, she could look to no means of security except the fidelity of her people; for the southern states of Germany were still more closely connected with France: by such changes of territory, all security of possession had vanished; and those sacred ties which had hitherto bound nations and princes together, were dissolved. The first instance now occurred of a royal family being dethroned by proclamation: the possession of Naples appeared a very desirable acquisition to Napoleon; its neutrality, when evacuated by the French troops, had been violated by a combined force of Russians and English from Corfu entering its territories, at the express desire of the imbecile Ferdinand, who wished to make a diversion for Austria in the north of Italy:¹⁵ a proclamation therefore issued from Schonbrun, on the twenty-seventh of December, declaring 'that the dynasty of Naples had ceased to reign.' Then followed an aggrandisement of the house of Bonaparte; and, amongst alliances formed for members of his family, and possessions annexed to their rank, the Neapolitan kingdom was conferred on his brother Joseph: in the beginning of 1806, this new king proceeded toward his capital; and Ferdinand despatched his old friend, Ruffo, the fighting cardinal, to Rome, for the purpose

¹⁵ See *Memoirs of Collingwood*, vol. i. p. 237, where it is said that the court of Naples was so ill prepared for the war which it courted, that there was not in all their magazines a supply of gunpowder for 6000 men, until it was furnished from the English ships.

of obtaining, if possible, an armistice of forty days, that he might abdicate in favor of his son: but, alas! his eminence joined the party now uppermost, and, accompanying them to Naples, celebrated a solemn mass in honor of king Joseph's inauguration; while the duke of San Teodoro, who had been despatched also by Ferdinand as an envoy, solicited a place in the new royal household; and the marchese di Gallo, late Neapolitan ambassador at Paris, who had been charged with a similar mission, became minister for foreign affairs:¹⁶ mean time, the wretched old court had retired again to Palermo; and the narrow straits of Messina, commanded by the British, were sufficient to limit the usurper's power: but, strange to say, the queen, whose intrigues, in every sense of the word, were unbounded, was found, within a few months, and continually afterwards, engaged in plots with France against her allies and protectors!

CHAP.
XLVII.
— 1806.

At the commencement of the year 1806, Bonaparte had acquired almost absolute dominion over the continent; while Britain, though uncontrolled on the ocean, was unable to make a serious impression on his power. Undeterred by any fear of a coalition, he was now at liberty to direct his whole force and energy to our subjugation; and if we had nothing to apprehend from the troops which he might be able to land upon our shores, other parts of the empire were not so invulnerable against his attacks. Ireland, exposed by grievances to the seduction of his emissaries, and accessible to the invasion of his army, had desisted indeed from rebellion, but still norished discontent: the fire, which had lately blazed with such fury, was smothered, but not extinguished; and though moderate catholics were ready to defer all discussion of their claims till the chief obstacle was removed, while the prudent and considerate among them were averse to those violent counsels from which they had already suffered so severely, it was hardly to be supposed that all were moderate and wise; but that many would

¹⁶ See Lord Collingwood's Memoirs, vol. i. p. 239.

CHAP.
XLVII.

1806.

Meeting of
parliament.

join themselves to an invading force, whenever it might appear upon their shores.

In this posture of affairs parliament met on the twenty-first of January. After suitable congratulations on our late naval successes, and regret expressed for the lamented death of the hero by whom the greatest was achieved, the speech stated, that his majesty had directed the treaties concluded with foreign powers to be laid before the two houses; also that £1,000,000, accruing to the crown from droits of admiralty, should be applied to the public service; and it concluded with a strong recommendation of vigilance and exertion against the common foe: no amendment to the address was moved in either house, on account of the dangerous illness of Mr. Pitt, now lying on his death-bed. This distinguished statesman had been compelled, at the close of the last session, to give up all active exertions, and retire to Bath; whence he returned on the eleventh of January to Putney, in a state of debility and exhaustion augmented by political failures and disappointed hopes: his constitution, originally delicate, sank rapidly; and on the twenty-third of January he expired, in his forty-seventh year, after having held the first place in the government of his country for a longer period than any other minister of Great Britain. In consequence of a motion made by Mr. Henry Lascelles, on the twenty-seventh, and carried by a majority of 258 voices against 89, his body was ordered to be interred at the public expense in Westminster Abbey, and a monument, with a suitable inscription, erected to his memory; while a sum, not exceeding £40,000, was voted, without opposition, for the payment of his debts.

Death of
Mr. Pitt.

His character.

As Pitt was the founder of a new school, during times of unexampled agitation, in which a contest of political principles convulsed all Europe, it is not easy to command a dispassionate survey of his ministerial conduct and character; for by his own party he has been represented as the preserver, and by his opponents as the bane of his country: but the causes

of this contradiction may be traced to the unavoidable difficulties of his situation, which forced him into measures probably at variance with the original bent of his genius and policy. When at an early age he assumed the helm of state, he at once exhibited a sense of personal dignity, and an uncompromising strength of purpose, which partook largely of the spirit of his illustrious father; at the same time showing himself a steady assertor of popular rights, a strenuous reformer of acknowledged abuses, and a rigid economist: his administration was constitutional and temperate; his enlightened efforts were successfully employed in advancing the commercial and financial interests of the nation; and could he have prosecuted his views through a long period of peaceful labors, he would probably have left only one opinion of his character among his countrymen. But at the awful crisis of the French revolution, he found himself involved in circumstances which allowed no moderate system of policy: his great antagonist had openly espoused the cause of democracy; the aristocratic party immediately rallied round the banners of government; and the minister's only alternative was to quit the helm, or place himself at their head. This election once made, his stern unbending spirit became engaged to the uttermost in upholding the cause of which he had avowed himself the champion: having embarked in the contest against those revolutionary principles which were desolating France, he considered no price too great for the means of opposing them: and therefore he employed his talents in forming coalitions, and in raising immense sums on public credit, which he distributed with a lavish prodigality, both at home and abroad: hence too he probably justified to himself his desertion of those principles of reform which he formerly professed; his ministration to aristocratic rapacity in a profusion of places, sinecures, and pensions; his leaning toward despotic principles; and his adaptation of a system of corruption to the machinery of government. Still it must be remembered, that to Mr. Pitt's general policy we are indebted for the

CHAP.
XLVII.

1806.

glorious termination of a war, carried on for life or death; since, notwithstanding the failure of his expeditions and confederacies, to him must be assigned the chief merit of our ultimate success: failure was naturally to be expected from the dissolute and corrupt governments with which he had to do, and which required to be beaten into propriety and discipline: but when they had become thus purified and invigorated, Great Britain, following the system of Pitt, again rallied them under her banners, united them in a more disinterested coalition, and supplied them with such resources as ensured to them victory in the contest. This eminent statesman therefore was unfortunate in the time of his decease; not living to behold the harvest, of which he had sown the seed: impartial justice also requires us to confess, that subsequent national distress, arising from the exhaustion produced by his system of expenditure, cannot wholly be laid at his door; for in this case, the best part of his financial plan was interfered with: though Mr. Pitt heaped an enormous load of debt on the nation, he provided means for its repayment by an accumulating sinking fund; but his successors not only applied that fund to the current expenses of the state, and thus threw every possible burden on posterity; but in later times, yielding to that impatience of taxation among the representatives of the people, which was justly reprobated by lord Castlereagh, they changed the whole principle of the sinking fund altogether, or rather abolished it for every effectual purpose.

Mr. Pitt's long administration again concentrated political power in the hands of certain great families: but as their sentiments accorded with those of their royal master, he was not anxious to dissolve such a confederacy; and thus, as an observant foreigner has remarked, 'in the bosom of our free constitution an oligarchy was formed, which subsequently pushed their altercations respecting the offices of state to a scandalous excess, though they were long unable to produce a single leading mind.'¹⁷ It is also deserving of

¹⁷ Heeren's History of the European States-System, vol. ii. p. 242.

notice, that Mr. Pitt's political character suffered much from his followers; many of whom, going far beyond their master, exaggerated his tenets into an indiscriminate aversion to liberty; and, without possessing either his genius or his courage, involved his memory in the disgrace of their own bigotry and selfishness: they are indeed exposed to a stigma, with which calumny itself never assailed the character of Pitt; whose integrity was unimpeachable, and whose lofty sense of honor kept him wholly free from sordid motives: his adherents however were not all so scrupulous; for the war administration over which he presided was one of the most profligate that ever engrossed or squandered public revenues; and the stain of corruption, thence engendered, so insinuated itself into all the branches of succeeding administrations, that the people at length opened their eyes, and a reform of parliament became inevitable.

CHAP.
XLVII.
1806.

Mr. Pitt's death, at the particular crisis in which it took place, was considered as a virtual dissolution of the administration: his colleagues not only wanted public confidence, but were disunited among themselves; and the loss of their great leader dissolved the single tie that bound them together: in circumstances so discouraging, the surviving members of the cabinet threw up the reins of government without a struggle; refusing to retain charge of them, even at the solicitation of their royal master. To lord Hawkesbury was offered the post of premier; but he deemed it too arduous, and chose rather to retire from office with a comfortable sinecure in the cinque ports.

The formation of a ministry was next proposed to lord Sidmouth, but he also declined the task; so that his majesty was obliged to repress, though he could not subdue, personal antipathies, and to court the aid of lord Grenville; even while he knew that his government would be saddled with Mr. Fox: on the third of February, arrangements were completed; embracing the leading members of two parties, known as the old and new opposition, together with the party of lord Sidmouth. The cabinet comprised earl Fitzwilliam,

Grenville
adminis-
tration.

CHAP.
XLVII.

1806.

as president of the council; lord Erskine, chancellor; viscount Sidmouth, privy-seal; lord Grenville, first lord of the treasury; lord Howick (late Mr. Grey), head of the admiralty; earl Moira, master-general of the ordnance; earl Spencer, Fox, and Wyndham, secretaries of state for the home, foreign, and war departments, with lord Henry Petty, chancellor of the exchequer, while lord chief justice Ellenborough also was admitted to a seat in the cabinet; contrary to all precedent since the revolution, except in the case of the earl of Mansfield; the duke of Bedford went to Ireland, where Mr. Ponsonby was appointed lord chancellor, and sir John Newport chancellor of the exchequer: lord Minto was made president of the board of control; Sheridan treasurer of the navy; general Fitzpatrick, secretary at war; sir Arthur Pigott and sir Samuel Romilly, attorney and solicitor general. The change extended itself even to subordinate offices of government: none so complete had been effected since the commencement of Mr. Pitt's first administration.

As lord Grenville's office of auditor of the exchequer was thought incompatible with that of premier; and his lordship, though his known opulence precluded all reasons for his holding the former place, was not willing to resign a large source of emolument attended with little trouble, a bill was brought into parliament, empowering him to name a responsible trustee for holding the auditorship, so long as he should continue at the head of the treasury: this method, taken to obviate the absurdity of checking a public officer by his own interference, was not regarded very favorably by the public; and the unconstitutional appointment of lord Ellenborough to a seat in the cabinet created a strong prejudice in the minds of all true patriots against the new administration: it certainly appeared to be the worst method for securing impartial justice, especially in political trials, that could have been devised. This combination of the judicial and political characters was understood to have been made at the instance of lord Sidmouth, who stipulated

for a political auxiliary; and for whose own introduction into the cabinet, Mr. Fox and lord Grenville incurred some censure: but his lordship's parliamentary interest was considered essential to the support of administration; and his admission was strongly urged, through Sheridan, by the prince of Wales, who took an active part in the negotiations which led to its formation. A reconciliation, as it was called, had taken place, about a year previously, between his royal highness and the king at Kew; but it was suspected at the time, and may be inferred, from a very remarkable letter, written immediately afterwards by his majesty to the princess of Wales, that his royal highness had an ulterior object in view: that tissue of female malice and defamation, which ended in 'the Douglas conspiracy,' had even then commenced; and the prince was eager to withdraw his daughter from her mother's care to his own: the king peremptorily denied his son's right; lord Moira was sent for to negotiate; and lord Thurlow, being consulted, is said to have given an opinion favorable to the father's claim: the king however asserted his superior title, and took the young princess under his guardianship, while he studiously countenanced and visited her mother. The prince by no means acquiesced in his majesty's claim; but an arrangement was at length made, by which the care of the child was surrendered to the king; who, in return, abandoned an intention which he had formed, of allotting apartments in Windsor-castle to the princess of Wales: in this year however the plot was more fully disclosed, which led to what was called, 'The Delicate Investigation.' Unfortunately, the circumstances of this revolting case are so connected with succeeding points of historical importance, that they require some general notice, however brief: the duke of Sussex having informed the prince that sir John Douglas had made known to him certain circumstances respecting the princess, which, if true, might affect not only the honor of his royal highness, but the succession to the throne itself; a formal declaration from sir John and lady Douglas

CHAP.
XLVII.

1806.

Affairs of
the prince
and prin-
cess of
Wales.

CHAP.
XLVII

1806.

was submitted to lord Thurlow, who gave his opinion that the matter must be submitted to the king: in consequence of which advice, and some farther examinations, a warrant was issued by his majesty on the twenty-ninth of May, appointing the lord chancellor, lord Grenville, earl Spencer, and lord Ellenborough to investigate the allegations made against her royal highness. These commissioners examined on oath, not only the principal informants, who charged the princess with avowed pregnancy, and the birth of a boy; but a numerous array of other witnesses, chiefly male and female domestics, who deposed to suspicious familiarities between the illustrious lady and several persons specified in the depositions. On the first and most serious part of this inquiry, the commissioners fully acquitted the princess; but they added, that 'evidence had been given of other particulars respecting the conduct of her royal highness, such as must, especially considering her exalted rank and station, necessarily give occasion to very unfavorable interpretations.'

The princess then complained of what she called a secret tribunal, and a secret judgment; which substantially acquitted her, while it imputed to her a system of indecorous conduct on the allegation of false witnesses: it does not however seem that justice or decency could have been better consulted, than by submitting the matter to a commission of four cabinet ministers, whose high rank and honorable character precluded all idea of subserviency to base motives; even supposing such a tribunal objectionable, it was not chosen by the prince; his conduct, therefore, was blameless on this point; he was only culpable, when, dissatisfied with its decision, he interfered to prevent his majesty from again receiving his consort in a manner due to her rank and station. An elaborate defence was drawn up for her royal highness by her political and legal friends, the chief of whom was Mr. Perceval: this was transmitted to the king; but a long time having elapsed without a reply, she ventured to repeat her asseverations of innocence.

and to request a decisive opinion from the throne, if not a satisfactory answer to her communication: after additional delay she made another remonstrance to his majesty, intimating that unless she were relieved from further suspense, her case must be laid before the public eye; and this hint, added probably to a favorable inclination on the king's part, produced a royal message, which, while it contained just and serious admonition, gratified the princess with a promise of readmission at court; but on her request, that a day should be named, when she might have that happiness, the expected honor was suspended, in consequence of the prince's interference, who wished to submit her vindication to his own legal advisers, and draw up a counter-statement. Alarmed at this formidable denunciation, she tried the effect of another appeal to the equity of her father-in-law, from whom alone, among her relatives in Great Britain, she could be said to have received kindness or sympathy; but the influence of her husband still prevailed over all expostulations, until those statesmen, who were more inclined to assist her, succeeded in driving her supposed adversaries from power: his majesty then readmitted her into his presence; and by this indirect recognition of her innocence prevented an appeal to public opinion; which she had threatened to make, by the publication of matter most objectionable, as administering food for scandal, and tending to diminish that respect for royalty which is the boast of British subjects.

CHAP.
XLVII.
1806.

The state of Europe, at the death of Pitt, rendered all negotiations for a safe and honorable peace difficult to this country, which had raised barriers against Napoleon only to be thrown down, and to afford pretexts for his future attacks on the independence of the continent: at the accession however of Fox to power, some expectations of peace were entertained; and that statesman was said to have taken the foreign department, on account of the facilities which it afforded for carrying his pacific views into effect. No long time elapsed before an artifice appeared to be contrived by

Negotia-
tions for
peace.

CHAP.
XLVII

1806.

the French government, to know what terms of peace the new ministry were likely to allow; for Mr. Fox had scarcely been ten days in office, when an alien, named Guillet de la Gevriilière, arrived at Gravesend without a passport, and acquainted the foreign secretary, by letter, that he had a very important communication to make: Mr. Fox immediately sent a passport, and admitted him to a private interview; but indignantly repelled his disclosure, true or false, of a plot to assassinate Bonaparte: his next step was to make the French government acquainted with the circumstances; while he detained the miscreant in custody, until due precaution could be taken against his designs, if he really entertained them. This communication, which was acknowledged by Talleyrand, with a just tribute to Mr. Fox's character, led to negotiations, in which the greatest obstacle to peace appeared to be a determination of the emperor to obtain Sicily, for his brother Joseph, in addition to Naples: Fox however was not so deficient in penetration, as to fail in perceiving, from the manner in which Napoleon had treated the courts of Vienna and Naples, and his known determination to degrade the ancient and illustrious republic of Holland into a petty kingdom for his brother Louis, that any agreement called a peace could only be a truce; that every state which had not the power of resistance, must fall into the vortex of imperial ambition; and that the only temper in which England could maintain peace, would be submission; but to this necessity she had not yet been reduced.

Mr. Fox soon confirmed public confidence in his war policy, by the decision with which he rejected the treaty of Amiens as a basis, and insisted on the emperor of Russia being admitted as a party: 'the first wish of my heart,' he said in the house of commons, 'is peace; but such a peace only as shall preserve our connexions and influence on the continent, and not abate one jot of the national honor:' these patriotic sentiments were received with loud acclamations by all the members, while a murmur of

applause ran through the crowd of strangers in the gallery. Negotiations were renewed in June by means of lord Yarmouth, who had been released, at Fox's intercession, from that arbitrary imprisonment which he had endured since the recommencement of hostilities: Talleyrand, thinking him a proper person to receive a confidential communication, invited him to a conference; in which he declared that the emperor was willing to restore Hanover, as well as to gratify the British court in other respects; and by casually observing, that France asked for nothing, he deluded his lordship into a belief, that the principle of *uti possidetis*, or present possession, would be admitted with regard to all British conquests. Pleased at this intelligence, the king sent a commission to lord Yarmouth, but desired him to withhold the communication of his full powers until he should obtain an explicit promise that Sicily should not be alienated from the house of Bourbon: it was hinted in reply, that Napoleon was very anxious to add Sicily to his brother's dominion, and would procure the Hans-towns for Ferdinand as an equivalent; but this answer was not deemed satisfactory.

The French government was at this time endeavoring to draw Russia into a separate convention, in order to obtain better terms by such a disjunction of the allies; and her envoy M. d'Oubril, falling into the snare, agreed to a treaty, which, in consideration of Napoleon's promise to recall his troops from Germany, tended to confirm the cession of Dalmatia to France, to render the Ionian islands independent, to expel the Russians from the Mediterranean, and to secure the integrity of the Ottoman empire: yet, so little respect had Bonaparte for his share of the engagement, that he was then employed in arbitrarily breaking ties which connected many princes and states with the German empire; whose constitution, nay, whose very name, he was preparing to subvert: accordingly, a declaration made by this new potentate to the diet,—that he no longer recognised the empire,—was sufficient to overthrow the structure of that

CHAP.
XLVII

1806.

ancient institution. Austria voluntarily laid aside her electoral dignity; and, on the fallen ruins of the imperial edifice, a new one, intitled 'The Confederation of the Rhine,'¹⁹ was erected; of which Napoleon became protector. It soon appeared that this confederacy was no union, but merely an accession to the protector's power; for the purpose of favoring his projects, and aiding him in his wars: thus another great stride was taken toward universal dominion; for henceforth it was not in the power of Germany to enter into a combination against France; Prussia now became isolated, and her fall was certain.

Even the disgust excited by this confederation did not induce his Britannic majesty to interrupt pacific negotiations, before he was well certified of Bonaparte's insincerity. Exulting in the supposed separation of Russia and Great Britain, Talleyrand, whilst he still held out his master's wish for peace, assumed a higher tone, and offered less favorable terms: lord Lauderdale, who had been sent to Paris, as a confidential friend of Fox, to conduct the conferences, soon found that no hope of success remained; and when the adoption of the *uti possidetis* was absolutely disclaimed, the British envoys prepared to depart: by certain concessions however they were induced to renew the discussions; and it was intimated to them, that beside the restitution of Hanover, Malta and the Cape of Good Hope would be ceded to his majesty, on the condition of his abandoning all other conquests, and exchanging Sicily for some valuable territory in a different part of Europe: when intelligence arrived that the emperor Alexander refused to ratify the treaty which his minister had signed, still greater con-

¹⁹ The constitution was framed and signed on the twelfth of July by Bavaria, Wurtemberg, Baden, Berg, Hesse-Darmstadt, Nassau-Usingen, and Nassau-Weilburg, Hohenzollern-Hechingen, and Siegmaringen, Salm-Salm and Salm-Kirburg, Isenburg, Arensburg, Lichtenstein, and the count of Leyen: the subscribers made a declaration at the diet of the first of August. Though all the German powers gradually joined it, except Austria, Brandenburg, Brunswick, and Hesse, it cannot be regarded as a voluntary accession: it was the only means of safety: at the same time, it was the sentence of death to many small princes and free cities; of which the former were incorporated into the larger powers, the latter held in possession; and the treatment of the reduced princes by some of their new rulers was sufficiently revolting.

cessions were held out by France for the promotion of a general peace.

CHAP.
XLVII.

1806.

That concert however with Russia, which had been suspended by this unauthorised treaty, was now restored; and lord Lauderdale was ordered to state, in addition to the demands of his Britannic majesty, the terms on which France might obtain peace with the autocrat: to this method of treating, the French minister acceded, and offered to yield Tobago and Pondicherry; but Napoleon was not disposed to resign his pretensions to Sicily or Dalmatia: as no prospect of agreement therefore appeared, the British plenipotentiary was recalled; even while the French court persisted, with true Machiavellian policy, in expressing the strongest desire of peace. Mr. Fox in the mean time had breathed his last; and when lord Lauderdale returned, unsuccessful in his negotiation, his passports were accompanied with a note, insinuating that the principles of Fox no longer animated the colleagues and successors of that great man: to this, however, his lordship gave a spirited and satisfactory reply.

The first debate in parliament which excited the attention of the country related to lord Ellenborough's seat in the cabinet; a station, which the opposition held to be utterly at variance with his official character as chief justice. Mr. Canning's speech on this occasion, in reply to Mr. Bond, who had ably defended the measure, placed it in its proper light, while it discovered enlarged views of constitutional principles, and a natural superiority to that narrow range of politics, to which at this time he was generally confined. In answer to the assertion, that a judge might with propriety sit in the cabinet, because the very independence of his situation rendered him the fittest person, Canning observed; 'that he viewed the question in a very different light: he thought that the holding a situation, which was in its nature precarious, and yet an object of ambition, tended to destroy that confidence which resulted from the independence of a judge. He disclaimed all personal motives: he

Parliamentary
proceedings.

CHAP.
XLVII.

1806.

only viewed the point in the abstract, and contended, that when you placed in the situation referred to, a person, who by law had been jealously made independent, you in a great measure did away with the effects of that independence. This would be evident if it were admitted, (and it could not be denied), that the removal of a lord chief justice from a place which was an object of ambition, would be attended with some degree of discredit to him; for, to avoid this discredit, there would at least, on some occasions, be a temptation for him to act in a manner not altogether consistent with his duty and character.' Another strong objection which he pointed out was this: 'that the attention of a lord chief justice would be distracted in the discharge of his official duties: he would indeed still pursue the objects which more directly regarded his profession; but, instead of building his fame on a strictly honorable administration of the laws, he might be aspiring after other objects of ambition.' The honorable gentleman went on to show that the example was supported by no analogy; that no expediency had been proved; and no attempt made to show its necessity. In the upper house lord Eldon admitted that such an arrangement was not illegal, and he would not say that it was unconstitutional; but he thought it inexpedient, because it tended to excite a suspicion of political partiality in the administration of justice: it was observable, he said, that lord Mansfield, whose case formed the solitary precedent, had become extremely unpopular after his entrance into the councils of government; and the jealousy which then arose in the minds of the people, however ill-founded, had been sufficient to weaken the confidence which ought ever to be reposed in a judge. The motion however of lord Bristol, which brought on this discussion, was negatived without a division; and lord Ellenborough continued a member of this cabinet until its dissolution.

As the state of our army required ministerial attention, the subject was repeatedly debated in council, before any scheme could be matured for the consider-

ation of parliament: Mr. Wyndham's suggestions were at length adopted by his colleagues, and the plan was at different times perspicuously stated to the house by the secretary to the war department. He contrasted the steady vigor of a regular army, with the desultory movements of citizens or peasants hastily collected together; and he vindicated the power of a government to raise men by compulsion for the defence of their country; but so many legal forms were supposed to be necessary for the exercise of this right, that it could not be enforced without the greatest difficulty: to invite and allure men would be the most advisable method of recruiting; let the service then be rendered more attractive, and he doubted not but that a sufficient force might at all times be readily brought into action. If the period of service should be limited, the rigor of discipline mitigated, and the allowance to disabled or retiring soldiers increased, military employment might be rendered desirable, and the army placed at once on a respectable and efficient footing: he proposed therefore that soldiers, instead of engaging for life, should in future be enlisted for a term of years: this term he divided into three periods, of seven years each, for infantry; and into three of ten, six, and five for cavalry and artillery; the soldier being allowed to claim his discharge at the end of each period, and intitled to certain advantages in proportion to his length of service. Desertion, it was said, might be punished by the loss of so many years' service, and corporal punishments diminished both in number and severity: it was proposed also that the volunteer corps should be formed of persons who could serve at their own expense, and that the peasantry should be loosely trained to harass and impede an enemy; this training to be compulsory, 200,000 men being annually made liable to its duties.

The friends of Pitt disputed the utility of this new scheme, and defended his organisation of military force: lord Castlereagh, in particular, deprecated the experiment, not only as useless, but hazardous; for

CHAP.
XLVII.

1806.

while arrangements were under deliberation, he said, the minds of the soldiers would become unsettled: the regular army had already been augmented by 45,000 men beyond the number which existed in the spring of 1804; and it was expected that a farther increase would soon take place, through an improved enforcement of his deceased friend's plan. Mr. Yorke asserted that the present time of service was not unlimited; since nothing was more easy, than for soldiers, who had been twenty-four years in the ranks, to obtain a discharge: Canning also exhibited all his powers of ridicule and argument; attacking Mr. Wyndham's plan as a visionary scheme, and a contradiction of principles which he had at other times recommended; ridiculing his analogies and illustrations, and condemning the discouragement of those more constitutional establishments, which serve to counterbalance the influence of a large standing army: notwithstanding this opposition, the equity of some of the proposed arrangements, and the utility of others, prevailed in both houses; and passed into laws by very considerable majorities.

On the twenty-eighth of March the budget was opened by lord Henry Petty, who stated the unredeemed debt of Great Britain and Ireland at nearly £566,000,000; of which the annual interest was about £27,500,000: the supplies for England and Ireland were estimated at £62,187,465; and among the ways and means, were a loan of £18,000,000, and an augmentation of the war taxes to £19,500,000, to be effected principally by raising the income-tax from six and a half to ten per cent: it was also proposed to raise the war duties on the customs; and, in order to cover the interest on the loan, to make permanent the duty on wine, and impose two pounds a ton on pig-iron: the duty on tea was to be equalised, and a tax imposed on appraisements. The income-tax bill encountered much opposition, but was passed with some modifications: the duty on iron excited such an outcry, that it was relinquished, and a tax on private brewers substituted in its place; but this was assailed

with a still stronger opposition, and the deficiency of interest on the loan was made up by an addition of ten per cent on the assessed taxes. CHAP.
XLVII.
1806.

Partisans of the late ministry were not displeased at the odium transferred to the new cabinet by these heavy imposts: seizing therefore with avidity on the opportunity thus offered, they assailed its members with every species of ridicule and reproach, especially employing the pen of Mr. Canning out of the house, and his powers of vituperative oratory within, to defame their characters, impugn their motives, and defeat their schemes; and perhaps there is no instance on record, where an administration has received so much abuse, merited and unmerited, as this of 'All the Talents.'

As the burthens of the people were so much increased, it was thought right that some attempts should be made to prevent the misapplication or embezzlement of public money: the chancellor of the exchequer therefore proposed, that, instead of the mere pretence of inquiry, a diligent and accurate examination of public accounts should be instituted: he stated, that beside five commissioners, to whom the task of general investigation had hitherto been confided, two had been appointed for special inquiry into military affairs, who had been so negligent or inattentive, that large sums had been paid for various services without their knowledge; that during six years, ten, and sometimes twenty per cent., had been taken by an unprincipled contractor out of £700,000 per annum; that with regard to £9,000,000 said to have been expended on barracks, no satisfactory elucidation had been given; that no accounts relative to the pay of the army had been regularly examined since the year 1782; and that £534,000,000 remained without vouchers for a fair expenditure: Mr. G. Rose, however, the general defender of public abuses, declared that only £800,000 could properly be said to be unsettled; and the chancellor of the exchequer admitted that no very large sums were due to the nation from public officers: yet it was evident that

CHAP.
XLVII.

1806.

great dishonesty and rapine had prevailed, which the former ministry had not properly endeavored to check: and two bills were introduced for the more effectual prevention of these delinquencies; one for the West Indian colonies, the other for the kingdom in general: the following were among the salutary regulations adopted in different departments, for which this administration intitled itself to the gratitude of the nation.

The balances of the treasurer of the ordnance were directed to be deposited at the Bank of England, and payments to be made by draughts on that establishment: the same principle was extended to the excise and customs, to the stamp and post offices, and to the office of surveyor-general of the woods and forests: salaries were increased, and fees of custom-house officers at the port of London abolished: other judicious measures were adopted for the settlement of public accounts: the corn trade also, between Great Britain and Ireland was placed on the same footing as that between the different English counties.

The accounts of East Indian establishments also came this session under the investigation of parliament: as stated by a member of the board of control, it appeared that the revenues of the three presidencies for 1803—4, amounted to £13,273,000, while the charges were £13,214,000; that the small surplus was granted to inferior settlements, which also required an additional advance of £245,000; that the company's debt demanded a sum of £1,500,000 to pay the interest; and that the profit on imported goods still left a deficit of about £1,124,000: a subsequent period being taken, a still more unfavorable prospect appeared; the excess of the charges being calculated at £2,651,900. In one of the debates arising out of this subject, the late governor-general was strenuously defended by his illustrious brother, sir Arthur Wellesley, who asserted that he had greatly increased our Indian revenues; attributing the augmentation of debt principally to the necessity of borrowing for commercial investments at a disadvantageous rate of interest,

and to loss sustained on the trade: Mr. Grant denied this statement; affirming that the increase of expenditure overbalanced that of revenue; and reprobating the wars which had been undertaken, as injurious to the reputation of Great Britain for honor and equity, while they had not conduced even to the security of our government: it appeared however to the house, that lord Wellesley was guided more by necessity than choice in his measures, which were judiciously directed to the permanent security of that vast empire over which he presided. Lord Castlereagh proposed that the company should be allowed to negotiate a loan in England for the reduction of their debt, on account of the comparatively easy terms on which it could be procured: his suggestions however were not adopted; nor did the earnest endeavors of Mr. Paull succeed in procuring the impeachment of that eminent statesman, whose enlarged policy added so much to the power and resources of our Indian possessions.

CHAP.
XLVII.
1806.

A far more questionable case than the preceding one was investigated with due solemnity in Westminster-hall; where lord Melville was brought to trial before his peers on the twenty-ninth of April. The zeal of his eloquent accuser was still as fervent as at the first moment of accusation; but that of Fox and other promoters of the trial was thought to be cooled by their elevation to power: the articles of impeachment, which were ten in number, contained three principal charges; the first was, that before the tenth of January, 1786, he had applied to his private use and profit various sums entrusted to him as treasurer of the navy; the second, that he had permitted Trotter, his paymaster, illegally to take from the Bank of England large sums issued on the treasurer's account, and to place them in the hands of his private banker; the third that he had fraudulently permitted Trotter to apply the said money to purposes of private use and emolument, from which he himself had derived profit. Lord Melville averred that he was not guilty of these charges;

Trial of
lord Mel-
ville.

CHAP.
XLVII.

1806.

when Mr. Whitbread addressed the court in an elaborate speech, and the solicitor-general recapitulated the evidence: his lordship's counsel, Mr. Plumer, who had distinguished himself in the defence of governor Hastings, occupied three days in repelling these accusations; and on the two following days, the managers replied: the proceedings were then deferred to the twenty-eighth of May; and a motion of thanks to the managers, made on the twenty-third in the commons by general Fitzpatrick, was agreed to with only one dissentient voice: at the appointed period the peers assembled; the assistance of the judges on certain points of law was obtained; and on the twelfth of June their lordships acquitted the accused of all the charges: on four of the articles, however, the majority in his favor did not amount to double the number of those who gave a contrary judgment.

Bill for the
abolition of
the slave
trade.

The conduct of the new ministers respecting the abolition of the slave trade will long be remembered to their honor: this measure, which had been supported by the eloquence of the late premier whenever it was brought before parliament, but had been constantly defeated by the prevalence of interests, which, as minister, he did not choose to oppose, now became so earnestly advocated, that considerable progress was made toward its accomplishment: a bill was introduced and carried, though not without strong opposition, to repress this unnatural traffic, by prohibiting the exportation of slaves from British colonies after January 1807; for it was stated, that neutral powers, having colonies in America or the West Indies, procured negroes by means of English vessels; and that even the French and Spaniards were indirectly supplied with them through the influence of our capital: another bill soon afterwards passed unopposed, for preventing the increase of the British slave trade, by prohibiting any vessels from embarking in it beside those that were already so employed. The next measure was a resolution of Mr. Fox, dictated by great prudence; not proposing that the traffic

should be instantly abolished, but involving a declaration of the house, that, as it was 'contrary to the principles of justice, humanity, and sound policy, effectual measures should be taken for putting an end to it, in such a manner, and at such a period, as might be deemed advisable:' and so impressed was Fox with the importance of his motion, as to make the following declaration:—'If,' said he, 'during almost forty years that I have enjoyed a seat in parliament, I had been so fortunate as to accomplish this, and this only, I should think I had done enough; and should retire from public life with comfort, and with a conscious satisfaction that I had done my duty.' The resolution was vehemently opposed by lord Castlereagh, the members for Liverpool, and a few others in the West Indian interest; but was carried by 114 votes against 15: in the upper house, a similar motion, originating with lord Grenville, was adopted by 41 against 20. On this occasion Lord Eldon intimated his opinion, that even on the coast of Africa, to which the operation of the bill was confined, the slave trade could not be abolished, unless other powers should concur in the measures that Great Britain might adopt. On the 4th of February a farther discussion arose respecting the examination of witnesses at the bar of the house before the second reading, when his lordship thought such a step unnecessary for the present; but desired not to be precluded from voting for the admission of evidence at a future stage. He feared that the measure now proposed, whilst it would utterly destroy British interests involved in the trade, would not diminish the transport of negroes, or effect the preservation of one single individual: but if a change of national policy on this subject should be resolved on, he hoped that due compensation would be assigned: the extent of the interests to be then compensated could be ascertained only by the examination of witnesses. The ground of his resistance to the measure was not a reluctance to redress any oppression or grievance, but a persuasion that the cause of justice and humanity would gain nothing by the

CHAP.
XLVII.

1806.

abolition as then proposed. The last step taken on this subject, during the present session, was a joint address from both houses, beseeching his majesty that he would take measures for obtaining the concurrence of foreign powers in the abolition of the slave trade.

So intirely was Mr. Canning bound by the chains of party, that no ministerial measure, however excellent in itself, or agreeable to his own most cherished sentiments, could secure his support: he suffered, therefore, this great moral question, which on former occasions he had so eloquently advocated, to be carried without his voice being raised to advance its progress, or to celebrate its success: all that he could bring himself to say, on this his favorite measure during other administrations, was cold and brief, intermingled with complaints against ministers, unworthy of his character: the Chelsea-hospital bill, on the twelfth of June, afforded him another opportunity of assailing them with invectives: at the close of an argumentative speech, he zealously warned the house against the giving to them that confidence which they claimed; concurring, as he did, in the opinion expressed by his noble and learned friends, lord Castlereagh and Mr. Perceval, respecting their general system, and the manner of carrying it into effect; since nothing could form a more ludicrous contrast than their promises and their performances. Speaking of lord Grenville, he observed;—‘My personal esteem and regard for that noble person continue unimpaired; but to talk of him now at the head of government, after all that has been seen and heard, and to consider him as the presiding and directing mind, is impossible: in his colleagues, I neither have, nor ever professed to have, that confidence which they now demand; and by a vote of this night I shall certainly refuse it to them.’ Until the termination of the session he continued to harass ministers by his bitter sarcasms; seconded by Mr. Perceval’s legal knowlege, and by lord Castlereagh’s extraordinary powers of lengthening out a debate: with such thorns in their sides, the ironical compliment paid to them by

his lordship, respecting their 'repose on a bed of roses,' was felt with double force. This active, determined, and powerful opposition had from the beginning rendered Fox's regular appearance in his place necessary: night after night his measures were assailed, especially by the ex-secretary: he was dying from the effects of disease, augmented by the cares of office, and a laborious attendance on the house; but no mercy was shown to him by his opponents; nor could he be persuaded by his friends to abandon the post of duty. The floor of the senate is to the statesman as the field of battle to the soldier: the true hero deserts not his standard, but struggles on to the last: such *had been* the fate of Pitt: such *was to be* the fate of his own principal persecutor; and Fox now fell in the conflict of parties, and the encounter of powerful minds: the enfeebled frame became at length unable to support the spirit which still flashed brightly even in the last hours of trial; and his serious illness and death were announced almost at the same time: he expired on the thirteenth of September, in his fifty-ninth year, and was buried in Westminster-abbey; where he reposes, by the side of his great rival. It is no pleasant task to dwell on the faults of an eminent man, who, above all statesmen of his day, seems to have been beloved in his life and lamented in his death: but, unhappily, a large portion of that affection with which he was regarded by his contemporaries was bestowed on qualities which impaired the dignity of his moral character, and rendered his talents less effectual for the public good. Mr. Fox, the victim of a most faulty education, became strongly addicted to those fashionable vices which too often ensnare genius, and are in turn invested by it in such attractive forms, as to command applause where they ought to excite abhorrence: he was what is called the delight of society; and society not only applauded the irregularities of his lax morality; but, what is indeed very rare, contributed to repair the loss of fortune to which those irregularities naturally led: this however de-

CHAP.
XLVII.

1806.

Death and
character
of Mr.
Fox.

CHAP.
XLVII.

1806.

prived him at once of independence and self-respect; and we look to him in vain for that steadiness of principle and consistency of opinion, which distinguished his great antagonist, whose life enabled him to soar above all humiliating engagements of party. In manners he appears to have been gentle and engaging; 'uniting,' as it has been observed by one who knew him well,²⁰ 'the seemingly repugnant characters of the mildest of men, and the most vehement of orators.' 'To speak justly of his powers in this latter respect,' says the above acute discriminator, 'would require a long essay:' the concise sketch of them, which he has himself drawn up, will perhaps be more acceptable to the reader:—'Every where natural, he carried into public something of that simple and negligent exterior which belonged to him in private. When he began to speak, a common observer might have thought him awkward; and even a consummate judge could only have been struck with the justness of his ideas and the transparent simplicity of his manners: but no sooner had he spoken for some time, than he was changed into another being: he forgot himself and every thing around him; he thought only of his subject: his genius warmed and kindled as he went on; he darted fire into his audience; torrents of impetuous and irresistible eloquence swept along their feelings and conviction. He certainly possessed, above all moderns, that union of reason, simplicity, and vehemence which formed the prince of orators—the quiet dignity of a mind roused only to great objects; but the absence of petty bustle, the contempt of show, the abhorrence of intrigue, the plainness and downrightness, and the thorough good nature, which distinguished Mr. Fox, seem to render him no unfit representative of the old English character, which, if ever changed, we should be sanguine indeed to expect to see succeeded by a better.'

Peace was the darling wish of Fox's heart, though he scorned to purchase that blessing by the slightest

²⁰ The late sir James Mackintosh.

sacrifice of national honor: having commenced the negotiation, of which an account has been given, he was spared the pain of seeing the intricate policy and inordinate ambition of the French government triumphing over his favorite object; while he felt, and expressed great satisfaction, at leaving his old associates fixed in the employments and honors of the state: those friends, however, thrown as they were by their predecessors into circumstances of extraordinary difficulty; laboring in part under the personal antipathy of their sovereign; hated for their system of policy by a tory aristocracy; and exposed to the clamor of the people, because they could not, in the face of numerous obstacles, bring their system into immediate operation—were not destined long to survive their illustrious chief. After his decease, lord Howick took the foreign office, and Mr. Thomas Grenville the place of lord Howick at the admiralty; lord Sidmouth succeeded to the presidency of the council, from which earl Fitzwilliam retired on account of ill health; and lord Holland accepted the privy seal. A dissolution of parliament immediately and unexpectedly ensued; but the returns were not such as to add much to the influence of administration.

CHAP.
XLVII.
1806.

It was not long before the gallant earl St. Vincent was called from his well-earned retirement, into active service, as commander of the channel fleet. He had no occasion to enter on such arduous duties through want of pecuniary resources or of public honors; and our navy was laboring under great defects, not only in the want of good seamen, but in the little attention paid to the comfort and health of such as were on board:¹ yet the vigor of his body and mind at the advanced age of seventy-two enabled him to undertake another naval campaign, likely to be attended with more than usual difficulties; while the claim thus

Naval
successes.

¹ His correspondence at this time lays open a dreadful scene of neglect in our admiralty as well as the officers of our navy. The hulks also, or receiving ships, were at this time shamefully neglected; and the observations of lord St. Vincent produced much reform in that department.—See his Life, by Captain Brenton, vol. ii. p. 245, &c.

CHAP.
XLVII.

1806.

made on his services by the very men who had been instrumental in turning him out of office, was as great a triumph as he could have desired. At the close of the preceding year, admiral Villaumez, accompanied by Jerome Bonaparte, succeeded in escaping from port with eleven sail of the line and several frigates: this fleet, after remaining united for ten days, separated into two squadrons; one of which, consisting of five ships of the line, two frigates, and a corvette, under admiral Le Seigle, steered for St. Domingo, and on the sixth of February was discovered by sir J. T. Duckworth, with seven ships of the line, and some frigates, to windward of Ocoa bay; when, after a furious action, three French ships of the line struck; two driven on shore were burnt; and the smaller vessels got off: the other squadron, of six sail of the line and three frigates, under Villaumez, and originally destined for the Cape of Good Hope, having received intelligence of the capture of that settlement, steered to the coast of Brazil, and thence to the West Indies: in June, admiral Cochrane, with only four sail of the line and three frigates, discovered them near Barbadoes, but did not think it safe to engage with so great a disparity of force: their ruin however was soon afterwards effected by the fury of the elements, in a tremendous gale on the eighteenth of August: the French admiral reached the Havannah with extreme difficulty; three of his vessels were destroyed on the American coast; another escaped into Brest; and the Veteran, of seventy-four guns, commanded by Jerome Bonaparte, was stranded on the shores of Britany.

Admiral Linois had long carried on a predatory warfare in the Indian seas; and the Isle of France had been the grand dépôt of his plunder, whence it was conveyed to France; and thither the admiral's ship, the Marengo, of eighty guns, and the Belle Poule of forty, were this year bending their course, when they were overtaken by sir J. B. Warren, with one of the squadrons despatched in pursuit of Jerome Bonaparte: on the morning of the thirteenth of March, after a

running fight of three hours, the Frenchmen were compelled to strike, and thus afford some atonement for their depredations on our commerce.

CHAP.
XLVII.
1806.

Five large frigates and two corvettes, with troops on board for the West Indies, having escaped from Rochefort in September, were encountered at sea by a British squadron, under sir Samuel Hood; who, after a running fight of several hours, captured four: our damage was small, but sir Samuel unfortunately lost an arm. Several gallant actions of less importance took place during the course of the year: an expedition against the Cape of Good Hope, consisting of 5000 men, under sir David Baird, with a naval force commanded by sir Home Popham, set sail from England in August 1805, and arrived the fourth of January following: on the eighth the troops advanced, and forced the enemy, who were about equal in numbers, to a precipitate retreat: the governor-general, Jansens, seemed disposed to maintain himself in the interior; but general Beresford being sent against him, he was induced to surrender, on condition of his forces being conveyed to Holland at our expense, and not considered as prisoners of war.

Sir Home Popham, who in 1804 had been appointed to confer with the insurgent general Miranda concerning his views on South America, had long held an opinion, that an expedition ought to be despatched against the Spanish settlements on the Rio de la Plata; and after his success at the Cape, he directed his thoughts to the conquest of Buenos Ayres; thus taking on himself an extraordinary degree of responsibility. Having persuaded sir David Baird to furnish him with a few troops, under general Beresford, he proceeded to St. Helena, where he obtained a small reinforcement to his little army, which even then did not exceed 1600 men, including marines: with this insignificant force he arrived at the mouth of la Plata in June; and on the twenty-fourth landed his men without resistance, about twelve miles from Buenos Ayres: after having dispersed a body of Spaniards, who fled at the first fire, Beresford entered the city on the

Expedition
to Buenos
Ayres.

CHAP.
XLVII

1806.

twenty-seventh; the viceroy having retreated to Cordova with a small force under his command. In the mean time, our squadron made a demonstration before Monte Video and Maldonado, where the regular troops of the colony were stationed; the defence of Buenos Ayres, supposed from its situation to be less liable to attack, having been committed to the militia: favorable terms were granted to the inhabitants, and the property of individuals on shore was respected; but a large booty was made of public money and commodities, and of shipping in the river.

The Spaniards were at first taken by surprise; but, on recovering from their panic, they collected the few troops in the neighborhood, under the direction of Liniers, a French colonel in their service, who crossed the river in a fog, on the fourth of August, with about 1000 men, unobserved by our cruisers: on the twelfth, a desperate action took place in the streets and principal square of the town; when the British, after losing 165 in killed, wounded, and missing, were ultimately compelled to surrender; but, contrary to the articles of capitulation, they were marched up the country. Sir Home Popham blockaded the river till October, when the arrival of troops from the Cape enabled him to make an attack on Monte Video, in which he was unsuccessful: on the twenty-ninth a body of troops was landed at Maldonado, and the Spaniards were driven from thence, and also from the isle of Gorriti.

Lord Howick, on the nineteenth of December, announced the recall of sir Home Popham in terms of severe reprehension; and on the seventeenth of February following, that officer was put under arrest, preparatory to a trial, for acting without orders, and for leaving the Cape unprotected: after an able defence, he was sentenced by the court to be severely reprimanded.

Disputes
with Ame-
rica.

Some disputes of an important character took place at this time between Great Britain and the United States. The complaints of the Americans were comprised in three heads: first, our practice of impressing

British seamen found on board their merchant vessels on the high seas; secondly, our violation of their rights as neutrals, in seizing and condemning their merchantmen, though engaged in what they considered lawful commerce; and, thirdly, our infringement of their maritime jurisdiction on their own coasts. On the first point it was urged, that native Americans were frequently impressed under pretence of their being Englishmen, and constrained to serve in the British navy; and the public mind throughout America was inflamed with exaggerated reports, stating that thousands of their citizens were in this situation: the second ground of complaint arose from a desire, on the part of the Americans, not only to trade with the colonies of a belligerent, in a manner that would not be permitted in time of peace; but to become carriers of their produce to the mother country; protecting it at the same time under their neutral flag: the third point, which merely required that the extent of their maritime jurisdiction should be defined, admitted of easy adjustment.

An amicable arrangement of these differences being equally desirable for both parties, a special mission was despatched to England, and conferences were opened in London by lords Holland and Auckland on one side, and by Messrs. Monroe and Pinckney on the other. After some deliberations concerning an efficient substitute for the practice of impressment, the latter consented, though contrary to their instructions, to pass on to the other subjects of negotiation; receiving an assurance that the right should be exercised with great caution, and immediate redress afforded on the representation of any act of injustice. On the subject of intercourse with any colonies of the enemy, a rule was established for defining the difference between a continuous and an interrupted voyage; while it was expressly stipulated, that on re-exportation, there should remain, after the drawback, a duty to be paid of one per cent., *ad valorem*, on all European articles, and not less than two per cent. on colonial produce. The maritime jurisdiction of the United States was guaranteed; and

CHAP.
XLVII
1806.

some commercial stipulations were framed for the reciprocal advantages of the two countries; but the American president, Mr. Jefferson, refused to ratify the treaty.

Turning their attention to foreign politics, ministers could not fail to observe a rising spirit of discord between France and Prussia; and, though they did not hail it with that joy which it would have afforded to Mr. Pitt, still they considered themselves bound to watch its progress: they also attended to the state of Italy; particularly that of Naples, where a French usurper was enabled, by his brother's arms, to exercise the functions of royalty: the Calabrians, however, ventured to dispute the legitimacy of his pretensions; and Ferdinand's queen was so anxious to profit by the loyalty of those rude mountaineers, that she importunately urged the British general, sir John Stuart, to aid them in their exertions: he accordingly sailed with about 5000 men; and, soon after his landing on the coast, found a body of French troops; superior to his own in numbers, strongly posted near the town of Maida. General Regnier, their commander, who might have defied all assaults, relinquished the advantage of position, and came down with confidence to meet his adversaries on the plain; when a vigorous cannonade and fire of musketry did considerable execution on the French as they advanced: both parties, however, soon ceased firing, and a trial of courage ensued, presaging, as it were, the final result of that mighty contest in which their countries were engaged: the left wing of the enemy advanced with alacrity; was met by its opponents; and the bayonets of the two lines were crossed: at that fearful moment, it is said, a slight sound from the French weapons, as they jarred against the steel in the firm grasp of their adversaries, gave indications of nervous apprehension: weighed in the balance, by that sign they were found wanting; in another moment the British bayonets were thrust home, and the plain was strewed with dead and wounded. Undismayed by this reverse, Regnier stimulated the efforts of his right wing to turn our left; but the troops employed in this service were suddenly

taken in flank, and routed by a reinforcement which had landed that morning, under the command of colonel Ross: above two thousand of the enemy were killed or wounded; while those captured in the pursuit, and at the neighboring posts, were even more numerous: yet sir John Stuart declined all prosecution of the contest, since the French still had a large force in the kingdom; and his generous mind was disgusted at the atrocities committed by the Calabrese insurgents; who were for the most part banditti, intent only on pillage and murder. After various conflicts, these worthy partisans of the king of the lazzaroni² were reduced to submission; when, under the severe and summary discipline of French rulers, they attained to a degree of civilisation totally unknown before or since that period. In the mean time, Ferdinand and his queen were confined to Sicily; where the former consoled himself with the pleasures of the chase; while the latter commenced a series of base and dishonorable intrigues with the enemy, against her protectors and her subjects, which eventually led to her expulsion from the island.

We must now revert to circumstances, which had the effect of stimulating another state to wrestle with the gigantic power of France, and to form the fourth continental coalition. It has been already observed, that the only nation bordering on French territories, which yet stood erect, was Prussia: she had acted an unworthy and imprudent part, and was about to become the victim of her own fatuity. Having signed two treaties, one by Haugwitz with Napoleon, and another by Hardenburg with England, both at the end of 1805, she became perplexed through her bad faith, and obtained advantage from neither: she naturally hesitated to accept Hanover, and to shut her ports against England; but as Anspach, Cleves, and other territories ceded by Haugwitz, were already seized by the French, her desire of securing an equivalent overcame her sense of justice; and she occupied Hanover with her troops. This conduct naturally

War between
France and
Prussia.

² So Ferdinand was commonly styled at Naples.

CHAP.
XLVII.

1806.

raised a vehement outcry in the British parliament; where the conduct of her monarch, who before the battle of Austerlitz might have been called the arbiter of Europe, became designated as an example of 'all that was contemptible in servility and odious in rapacity:' war was denounced against him, and British ships blockaded his ports: Napoleon in the mean time pursued his own plans; libelling Hardenburg in the *Moniteur*, and accusing him of selling his country, until he procured his dismissal, notwithstanding the support and interference of the queen. But while Prussia had brought herself into this state of degradation chiefly for the sake of Hanover, her surprise was extreme to learn, that Bonaparte, in his negotiations with the British government, had offered to restore that country as the price of peace: it was evident that the French emperor considered his ally in the light of a worthless instrument, which he could manage at pleasure; but the mistrust and alarm which this conviction created was greatly augmented by the confederation of the Rhine, erected without the consent, or even knowledge, of the Prussian government. The confederacy was ratified in July; when a cessation of diplomatic discussions took place between Great Britain, Russia, and France: in August Prussia sounded the trump of war by increasing her army, and calling out its reserves: but if it was imprudence in this power to decide on war, it seemed madness not to have waited for the aid of Russia, and to have entered sincerely into the bond of union with Great Britain: yet lord Morpeth, who was sent on a special mission to the Prussian head-quarters, found the wavering monarch so distracted between the temptation of a British subsidy, and the necessity of restoring Hanover, and encountered so much evasion on this account, that he could scarcely conceal his disgust and indignation.

For the purpose of forming an association with Saxony and Hesse, the former of which states was unwillingly constrained to become an ally by the advance of Russian troops, and the latter determined on

neutrality, the Prussian army marched south to Weimar, far from its own territory, and the succor of its great northern ally: thus the blunder of sending Mack to Ulm was repeated: the first hostile movement was on the twelfth of September; on the twenty-fifth Napoleon left Paris; crossed the Rhine on the first of October; and on the sixth was at Bamberg, the rendezvous of his army. The Prussian monarch, without experience or capacity, had placed himself in the hands of his queen, whom Napoleon satirised in his bulletins; and of a council of generals, headed by the celebrated duke of Brunswick; a chief noted for incapacity. The army which he commanded was scattered from Eisenach to Weimar; and as it had advanced so far, it should have taken the offensive, and pushed on still farther. The French came from the south; and as the road by which the Prussians had marched, by which they must retire, and along which lay their magazines, was in a north-easterly direction toward Leipsic, and consequently oblique to the French, Napoleon determined to march on it, rather than on Weimar: by this manœuvre he cut his adversaries off from their home and magazines; the only resistance being made at Saalfeld by prince Louis, who was slain in the combat. The French now occupied the course of the Saal; their main force being collected at Jena under Napoleon; while two divisions, under Davoust and Bernadotte, were stationed at Naumburg, and on the high road from Weimar to Leipsic and Berlin. To dislodge these, and restore their intercepted communications, was now the grand object of the Prussians: accordingly, the greater part marched under the king and his generalissimo to attack Davoust, whom they met at Auerstadt; while the remainder, under prince Hohenlohe, advanced against Napoleon at Jena: the two encounters took place on the same day, the fourteenth of October.

CHAP.
XLVII.
1806.
Advance of
Napoleon.

The issue of these conflicts proved more disastrous to the Prussians, than that of Austerlitz in the preceding year had been to the Austrians. The battle of Jena was easily gained; but Davoust had a much

CHAP.
XLVII.

1806.

harder task than Napoleon, being opposed to triple his numbers, and destitute of cavalry; while Bernadotte, who was ordered to assist him, declined to go, under a pretence of etiquette, and a mistake respecting the main body of the Prussians; which, like Napoleon, he thought was at Jena. The routed troops from both fields, as they mingled in their flight, informed each other of the extent of the disaster; and their monarch sent to request an armistice, which was refused: next day, Erfurdt surrendered to Murat, with 100 pieces of artillery and 14,000 men; while various other fortresses were delivered up, even to the astonishment of the enemy themselves. The remains of the grand army fled in the direction of Magdeburg; and on the twenty-fifth Napoleon entered Potsdam: he there descended into the tomb of Frederic the Great, the only modern general whom he affected to reverence; but he despoiled the palace of Sans Souci of that hero's sword, and the colors taken in the seven years' war, which he sent as trophies to the Hotel of the Invalids at Paris. On the twenty-seventh he made his triumphant entry into Berlin, where he treated the civic authorities and courtiers with bitter scorn and sarcastic taunts; threatening to reduce those nobles of the court so low, 'that they should be obliged to beg their bread:' he found afterwards, to his cost, how deep a wound may be inflicted on a generous people by attempting morally and politically to degrade them: on the twenty-first of November was issued the famous Berlin decree, declaring the British isles in a state of blockade. Napoleon was now advancing toward universal conquest with gigantic strides: in a few weeks all the Prussian provinces, with their fastnesses, were in his hands, as far as the Vistula; behind which river their king had sought refuge with his Russian ally. A separate peace and alliance was now concluded between France and Saxony; which latter power, being raised to the rank of a kingdom, promptly acceded to the confederation of the Rhine: on the other hand, the elector of Hesse was rewarded for his neutrality by expulsion from his territories; and 'the houses of Hesse-Cassel and Bruns-

wick ceased to reign.' The French armies also occupied the free city of Hamburg, against which the emperor had no assignable cause of war: but it was necessary to shut this great port against British commerce.

CHAP.
XLVII.
1806.

When Prussia fell, the grand bulwark of Russia was overthrown; and its conqueror entertained a project of raising up an independent throne on the very frontiers of the great northern power: the injured Poles were summoned to insurrection, and an auxiliary army was formed in Prussian Poland: the establishment of a Polish legion showed, from the first, how this country lay within the scope of Bonaparte's policy; but it happened that the only just and equitable scheme which he meditated never had effect; and Napoleon, during the disasters of his retreat from Moscow, had cause to lament his illusive promises made directly or indirectly to the unfortunate Poles.

The hopes of safety entertained by Frederic William from his northern ally, were much diminished by the war which at this time broke out between Russia and Turkey: Sebastiani, who had been sent by Napoleon to Constantinople, succeeded, after a few days of intrigue, in destroying amicable relations existing, not only between Russia and the Porte, but also between this latter power and Great Britain: in a moment the invasion of Egypt by France was forgotten; and her ambassador was seen arming the batteries of Constantinople, and commanding its militia against the English: as war followed on the Danube, this caused a powerful diversion of Russian force, which might otherwise have extended a more efficient support to the Prussian fugitives.

War between
Russia and
the Porte.

In the autumn of this year earl St. Vincent, and lord Strangford, were sent on a mission, with six ships of war to Lisbon; that they might assist the government of that unhappy country in opposing the designs of France and Spain, or in case of necessity to convey the court to its Brazilian possessions. On this occasion the weakness and vacillation of the house of Braganza justified every unfavorable anticipation of

CHAP.
XLVII.

1806.

the noble admiral. 'Unimproved,' says captain Fenton, 'by experience, unawed by events of daily occurrence, the princes of that corrupt family persevere in their deeds of misrule, cruelty and injustice, until the measure of their crimes was full; and the same causes which have invariably produced the same effects, have thrown not only the kingdom of Portugal, but the whole peninsula, into a state of revolution, anarchy and civil war. The emigration now offered was rejected, but embraced about two years after; from that period to the present moment, the affairs of both of Spain and Portugal have been gradually sinking into what appears to be almost hopeless and irreparable misery; to that state which history, sacred and profane, assures us has invariably been the lot of those nations whose rulers and people have forsaken the paths of religion and justice.'³

³ Life of Earl St. Vincent, vol. ii. p. 299. 'For the melancholy picture of court,' observes the earl to lord Howick, 'I must refer you to lord Strangford's despatches: the description is *too bad for the pen of a seaman*.'—p. 303.

CHAPTER XLVIII.

GEORGE III. (CONTINUED.)—1807.

Meeting of parliament—Attacks on ministers—Financial arrangements—Slave-trade abolition, &c.—Bill for removing disabilities from the Roman catholics—Produces the dismissal of ministers—New administration—Conduct of the king generally approved by the country—Address of the city of London—Indignation of the opposition—Trial of strength between the two parties—Dissolution of parliament—Meeting of the new one—King's speech and address—Debates, &c.—Prorogation on the fourteenth of August—Events of the war carried on against Russia and Prussia by Napoleon—Treaties of Tilsit—Napoleon's plan of prohibiting British commerce from European ports—British orders in council—Bombardment of Copenhagen, and seizure of the Danish fleet—Indignation of the emperor Alexander at the conduct of Great Britain—Failure of sir John Duckworth's expedition to Constantinople—Unsuccessful invasion of Egypt—Disasters in South America—Capture of Curaçao—French invasion of Portugal, whose royal family retire to Brazil—Milan decree issued by Napoleon—Disputes with the United States—Death of cardinal York—Louis XVIII. arrives in Britain—Capture of Danish West Indian islands.

On the nineteenth of December the new session of parliament was opened by commission; and the speech dwelt on the calamities of war; the progress and power of France; the failure of pacific negotiations for peace, which the enemy had turned to the purposes of his insatiable ambition; and the necessity of union, firmness, and courageous endurance in the nation, to meet the peculiar exigences of the crisis: the animosity indeed of the enemy had lately proceeded to the extreme of commercial hostility: by his Berlin decree Napoleon not only excluded neutrals from the harbors of France and her allies, if they had recently visited a

Meeting of
parliament.

CHAP.
XLVIII.

1807.

British port, but ordered the confiscation of all commodities and manufactures of Great Britain and her colonies wherever found: the absurd import of this ordinance was to institute a universal blockade of the Britannic islands; and the only answer given, for the present, by our government, was an order to confiscate all vessels trading between one French or dependent port and another. Mr. Canning rose in the house of commons, not to propose an amendment to the address, but to introduce another, which he contented himself with reading, and afterwards publishing in the journals of the day: the speech, by which it was prefaced, exhibited in some parts, a show of candor; though its general character was that of unrelenting hostility to the present administration; and the candor itself seemed as if designed only to render the censure more effectual. After strongly condemning the policy of our breaking with Prussia for the sake of Hanover, he thus described the conduct of Great Britain toward that power:—‘Prussia,’ said he, ‘unable to resist France, encroached on us: we had however the option to pass over a just cause of complaint, and to leave untouched the only state in Europe which appeared capable of forming the germ of an alliance hostile to the ambitious views of Bonaparte: but the conduct of ministers was the converse of their policy: by that conduct Prussia had been compelled to act without our advice or assistance; and to plunge into a war, of which, if our advice could not have prevented it, our assistance might at least have meliorated the termination. Would any man of common reflection say, that for the restoration of Hanover it was worth while to make war on Prussia? The British government however continued at war with her as long as the resources of Prussia were unimpaired, and her strength unexhausted; but as soon as there seemed a prospect of war between Prussia and France, an ambassador was despatched to Berlin, with instructions adapted to all possibilities, except that which was most probable, namely, the actual commencement of war: for that no provision had been made: as soon however as lord

Morpeth returned, our government began to see their error, and to think that there really was something like war between the two powers, from the trifling circumstance that the Prussian army was annihilated: they then sent a few military men to their aid; and when the Prussian monarchy shall be destroyed, they will perhaps send an army.' He next censured our foreign diplomacy; citing the instance of 'a minister at Paris negotiating a peace, and another at Berlin instigating war for the same object:' adverting also to Mr. Fox's first letter to Talleyrand, he observed, 'that there were fifty other and better ways, in which the intelligence it contained might have been communicated; and he condemned most strongly the reception which the answer to that letter experienced: the assertion in it, that the British government was beginning a new course, as illustrated by the transaction alluded to, was false: never had the British government been stimulators of assassination; and had he held the situation which the late right honorable gentleman occupied, he should have thought it his duty to repel such an accusation with contempt and indignation.' On this occasion, and also on the fifth of January, when the subject of negotiation with France was discussed, the character of his honored and lamented friend was powerfully and pathetically vindicated by lord Howick, who went through the whole of the correspondence between Mr. Fox and Talleyrand, to prove that the former was altogether free from any imputation on his integrity or his political wisdom: toward the conclusion of a long and ingenious speech, his lordship thus expressed his sentiments respecting the contest between Great Britain and France:—'I am far from encouraging very sanguine expectations, after all that has happened on the continent within these few years: the event is in the hands of 'Him who alone giveth the victory:' but one thing is clear; that the progress of Bonaparte has never yet been stopped by submission: our only hope therefore is in resistance, as far as we can resist his ambitious projects: we have done what honor and duty required us to do: when this instru-

CHAP.
XLVIII.

1807.

ment of vengeance may be deprived of his terrors, I know not; but we may at least look to the honor and independence of our country, as secure against his attacks; and while Great Britain exists as an independent and an honorable nation, there will still remain some hope of restoring that political balance in Europe, which has for the present been overturned.'

The speech of Canning, who followed Whitbread in this debate, was an ironical attack on ministers, under pretence of defending them against that gentleman; who, though not their colleague, had generally identified his politics with theirs. In his concluding observations are the following severe reflections on the conduct of government:—' War is undoubtedly a great calamity, and peace an inestimable blessing; but war may yet be felt preferable to an inglorious and insecure peace: on the other hand, an inglorious and insecure peace is to be deprecated as an evil; yet it is possible that a war may be so conducted as to render even such a peace an object of desire: ministers have so contrived, as to render this a question of no small doubt and perplexity; they make the choice between peace and war difficult, or perhaps almost indifferent: when I peruse their negotiations, and see to what sort of a peace alone they could have led, with what chance of security, with what hope of permanence, I am inclined to congratulate myself on the escape from such a peace to a continuance of the war: but, on the other hand, when I observe what sort of a war the right honorable gentleman, Mr. Wyndham, carries on, I can scarcely refrain from casting back a wistful look at the negotiation: if war were conducted with that ability which we had a right to expect from the character which the present administration gave of themselves, or suffered to be given of them by those most in their confidence, and from the unsparing censure and contempt which they lavished on the exertions of their predecessors in office; if it were conducted with that vigor, which the country has a right to demand at their hands, trusting them, as it does, with all its means, and seconding them with all its

zeal and exertion; if any blow had been struck against the enemy in the course of the year, during which these ministers have wielded the whole strength of the empire; if every effort had been made, or even every disposition manifested, to give heart and hope to the nations of the continent, so that out of such a war might arise the promise of an honorable, secure, and permanent peace,—unquestionably, in that situation of things, the rupture of the late negotiation would be matter of unqualified joy, and I could not bring myself to concur in lamenting it: but if the war that is to come is to be the counterpart of that which we have hitherto witnessed since the accession of the present administration; if the events and exertions of the last ten months are to be taken as the sample and the measure of our activity and achievements; if, while the enemy insultingly tell us, at every step of the negotiation, *beaucoup se prépare*; and telling us so, uniformly keep their word; if, on our part, such opportunities are to be thrown away, as have existed for the last three months, and as exist still, had we the spirit to take advantage of them; if Bonaparte may traverse the continent of Europe to its farthest extremities, and drain France of her last man, relying as fearlessly and as securely on our supineness, sloth, and despondency, as he could have done on our faithful observance of the stipulations of the most advantageous treaty of peace; and, lastly, if that disheartening maxim, to which I have already had occasion to refer with sorrow and shame; that maxim, which was so deeply impressed on the mind of the government, even in the beginning of the negotiation, that it overflowed in confidential communication to France itself;—the maxim, that there is nothing so chimerical as any new project of continental confederacy against France; if that, I say, still prevails, and prevails with all the additional weight which it may have acquired from the unfortunate events that have occurred since it was first promulgated;—then, indeed, seeing little to expect from such a war, conducted on such principles, under such auspices, and

CHAP.
XLVIII.
1807.

with no better hopes in the minds of those who have charge of it, I can, in that sense, join in expressing regret at the failure of the negotiation.'

Parliament having provided for an augmentation of our sea and land forces, now directed its attention to the improvement of the revenue. Lord Henry Petty, having stated the total amount of supplies for the year 1807 at £40,527,065, and the ways and means at £41,100,000, brought forward a permanent plan of finance, professing for its object to provide means to support the honor and independence of the empire during the necessary continuance of war, without perceptibly increasing the burdens of this country, and with manifest benefit to its public creditors. This plan was adapted to meet a scale of expenditure, nearly equal to that of 1806; and it assumed that, during the war, the annual produce of the permanent and temporary revenue would continue equal to the produce of that year: keeping such premises in view, he proposed that the war-loans for the years 1807, 1808, and 1809 should be £12,000,000 annually; for 1810, £14,000,000; and for each of the ten following years, £16,000,000: those several loans were to be made a charge on the war-taxes, estimated to produce £21,000,000 annually: this charge to be at the rate of ten per cent. on each loan; five per cent. for interest, and the remainder as a sinking fund, which, at compound interest, would redeem any sum of capital debt in fourteen years. The portions of war-taxes, thus successively liberated, might, if the war should still be prolonged, become applicable in a revolving series, and be again pledged for new loans: it was however material that the property-tax should in any case cease on the sixth of April next after the ratification of a peace; on the result therefore of the whole measure, there would not be imposed any new taxes for the first three years from this time: new taxes of less than £300,000, on an average of seven years, from 1810 to 1816, both inclusive, were all that would be necessary, in order to secure the full benefit of the plan here described, which would continue for twenty

years, during the last ten of which again no new taxes would be required. After repeated discussions, this plan was agreed to, and the funds rose considerably; which gave the minister an opportunity of negotiating a loan on terms advantageous to the public, yet not unproductive to the contractors.

On the second of January, 1807, lord Grenville introduced a bill for the total abolition of the slave-trade, which was read a first time, and printed: on the fourth of February, counsel were heard against it at the bar of the house; and next day his lordship concluded an elaborate speech, by moving its second reading; when he was opposed chiefly by the duke of Clarence, earls Westmoreland and St. Vincent, lords Sidmouth, Eldon, and Hawkesbury; but, on a division, at four in the morning, the motion was carried by 100 against 36: on the tenth, the bill was read a third time, and ordered to be sent to the commons for their concurrence: on the twenty-third, lord Howick moved that it should be committed; when, so great had been the progress of philanthropic sentiments among British legislators, that only sixteen voices were found bold enough to oppose the 283 raised in favor of this righteous cause. The military inquiry, which had, in the mean time, been going forward, discovered many scandalous abuses in the expenditure of public money; but the sum recovered was scarcely sufficient to defray the expenses incurred; nor could amendment or redress in peculations of this kind be expected under the old system of parliamentary corruption. Mr. Whitbread brought in a bill to alter the poor-laws: since it appeared that about one-seventh of the whole population of England and Wales received intire support or partial relief from the six other parts; human misery being much increased by this encouragement of indolence, dissipation, and vice; as well as by the promotion of early and improvident marriages among the poor: the nation however was not yet sufficiently alive to the mischiefs resulting from the old system; and, as the

CHAP.
XLVIII.

1807.

ministry did not enter with zeal into his views, the project was for the present abandoned.

On the sixteenth of March, the slave-trade abolition bill was read a third time, on the motion of lord Henry Petty, and passed without a division: it enacted, that no vessel should clear out for slaves from any port within the British dominions after the first of May, 1807; and that no slave should be landed in the colonies after the first of March, 1808: on the eighteenth, it was carried up to the lords, for their concurrence in some amendments; when lord Grenville instantly moved that it should be printed, and taken into consideration on the twenty-third; at which time the alterations were agreed to. The reason of this haste was soon afterwards discovered.

With the leaders of administration the catholic question was not a subject of secondary policy, but of paramount importance; and considering, as they did, the removal of certain disabilities from papists to be essential to the security of the empire, it can excite no surprise that they made it a matter of discussion in the cabinet; and although, in consequence of lord Sidmouth's aversion to the measure, and some interviews held by lords Grenville and Howick with his majesty, the subject was for a time abandoned; yet it was at length partially revived by a bill for allowing promotion in the army and navy to Romanists, as well as to others dissenting from the protestant establishment. It was well known that the king had accepted his present ministers, not by choice, but from necessity; and there was a party arrayed behind the throne, which regarded their present proceedings with extreme satisfaction: the bill, lately introduced into parliament, had indeed been submitted to the sovereign; and, receiving his reluctant acquiescence, had been read for the first time on the fifth of March: lord Howick however put off its second reading from the day originally ordered; for the king's sentiments, in the mean time, had undergone a material change: he now pleaded the intervention of his coronation oath;

and ministers, bending to his conscientious scruples, consented to withdraw the bill. One party said, this alteration was produced by secret advisers, anxious for power and place, who encouraged his majesty's scruples, and suggested to his mind an idea of exacting a written pledge from his cabinet, not only to abandon this measure, but never to resume it: by the other it was alleged, that an attempt had been made to impose on the sovereign by some alterations made in the bill, after it had been submitted to his approbation; that, although these changes did not affect the principle of the measure, yet they naturally gave it a different aspect; and the same deference or fidelity, which had induced ministers to apply for his majesty's assent to the original bill, should have led them to communicate to him orally the proposed alterations, instead of merely detailing them in a despatch, which, among various and voluminous documents daily submitted to his majesty's inspection, might easily have escaped notice: be this as it may, the king now decidedly objected to any extension of the act of 1793; and ministers, having led the people of Ireland to entertain great hopes, and having fully developed their plans to the house, thought it preferable to abandon the measure altogether than revert to its original terms.

It is impossible not to suppose, that some degree of irritation now operated on both parties, from the disappointment which each had received; and such a state is always more easily aggravated than healed. Ministers, in withdrawing the measure, required that a minute of council should be entered, recording their opinions on the subject, and reserving to themselves the power of suggesting any measure which they might deem expedient; the declaration being accompanied with a profession of their sincere wish to consult the personal ease and comfort of his majesty. Whether this requisition preceded or followed the demand made by the king, of a written pledge that the abandoned measure should never be resumed, it is difficult to determine; but certain it is, that such a demand was resisted as unconstitutional, and incom-

CHAP.
XLVIII.

1807.

patible with ministerial responsibility: the breach had extended too far to be closed: confidence and cordiality between the parties never had existed; but sensibility was now incurably wounded, and the dissolution of the cabinet was foreseen as a necessary consequence: its members however determined not to resign office, while they considered themselves merely pursuing the line of duty; but rather to wait for an unceremonious dismissal.

Dismissal
of minist-
ters.

Accordingly, on the twenty-fourth of March, lord Grenville received a letter from his majesty, stating that he would be ready to receive him and his colleagues on the following day, at half-past eleven, to deliver up their seals of office: they accordingly attended for this purpose at the queen's palace; and it then appeared that a commission had been obtained, for the royal assent to the bill for abolishing the slave-trade: it was instantly opened by lord chancellor Erskine; the bill passed into a law; and Great Britain set an example to the world worthy of her exalted rank, but which as yet has found few imitators among christian nations: indeed for want of the requisite concurrence on the part of foreign states, the sufferings endured by the African race have been dreadfully augmented: so manifold are the difficulties which arise, and so great is the caution that is required in attempting the cure of abuses in which trading interests, and the cupidity of merciless adventurers, are extensively involved.

New
cabinet.

After the dismissal of his cabinet, his majesty held a private levee, when the new ministers kissed hands on their appointment. Lord Grenville's office was conferred on the duke of Portland, as nominal head of the new administration; under whom, Mr. Perceval, a barrister of eminence, ready in debate, and well acquainted with parliamentary tactics, was commissioned to act: to allure this gentleman from the profession of the law to the field of politics, he was offered the chancellorship of the duchy of Lancaster for life: on which occasion it was properly observed, that if aspiring adventurers were not satisfied with

the fair emoluments of office, but expected an immediate equivalent for professional profit, they ought not to accept any public employment; and an address was voted, requesting that his majesty would not grant for life an office which had usually been held during his pleasure. The three new secretaries of state for the war and colonies, the home, and the foreign departments respectively, were lord Castlereagh, lord Hawkesbury, and Mr. Canning: lord Mulgrave was placed at the head of the admiralty; the great seal was transferred to lord Eldon;¹ earl Camden, destined to resume the viceregal office in Ireland; was ultimately appointed president of the council. Earl Bathurst had a seat in the cabinet as president of the board of trade; the earl of Westmoreland took the privy seal; Mr. Huskisson became one of the secretaries of the treasury; and the duke of Wellington, then sir Arthur Wellesley, entered into political life as chief secretary for Ireland.

It cannot be denied that the conduct of his majesty was approved by the majority of his subjects: the cry of 'No popery' had been raised, and re-echoed from one end of the realm to the other; and the lampoons of Canning on the fallen ministry, whom poor Sheridan ruefully accused 'of raising up a wall, against which they might strike their own heads,' were received with that applause which ever accompanies a congeniality of sentiment: the corporation of London led the public voice on this occasion by an address; to which his majesty responded in the following terms:—

'I receive with the greatest satisfaction the assurances you give me of your concurrence in those principles, which have governed my conduct on the late important occasion. It has ever been my object to secure to all descriptions of my subjects the benefits of religious toleration; and it affords me particular gratification to reflect, that during my reign these

¹ His lordship writing to a friend on this occasion observes, 'While dreaming of a visit to you, I awoke with the great seal in my hand to my utter astonishment.'—'The king,' he says, 'considered the struggle as for his throne; and he told me but yesterday, when I took the seal, that he did so consider it; that he must be the protestant king of a protestant country, or no king.'

CHAP.
XLVIII.

1807.

advantages have been more generally and extensively enjoyed than at any former period; but at the same time I never can forget what is due to the security of the ecclesiastical establishment of my dominions, connected as it is with our civil constitution, and with all those blessings, which, by the favor of Providence, have hitherto so eminently distinguished us among the nations of the world.'

With all the influence of a parliament lately collected under whig auspices, the original leaders of which were formidably arrayed in opposition, Mr. Perceval and his colleagues had now to contend. The indignation of the discarded ministers was inextinguishable: they beheld themselves superseded by men, who, without interest or power in the country, were suddenly summoned to be its rulers; and who, by a tacit compact at least, if not by a direct pledge, had surrendered to the personal feelings of the monarch their right of recommending, or even discussing, a question vitally important to the state: these too were individuals, whom they had been accustomed to consider merely as the satellites of Pitt, and as entertaining views very different from those which they now acknowledged: in Mr. Perceval they recognised only a practised lawyer, who could never soar from the contracting atmosphere of the bar to the elevation of a statesman: lord Castlereagh they despised as a traitor to the interests of his own country: to Canning, while they gave him no credit for integrity or political principle, they accorded a full measure of hatred on account of that bitter satire, of which they had so often felt the lash: and in lord chancellor Eldon they saw the principle of stationary policy *personified*: with him no institution could be tolerated, unless impressed with the seal of antiquity; no innovation admitted, *ne quid detrimenti caperet respublica*.

The first meeting of parliament, after the new appointments, was of course a trial of strength: the debate was acrimonious, and the subject of it calculated to excite feelings of a stronger nature than those of mere political hostility; for the motion made by Mr.

Brand imputed a violation of duty to every minister who should restrain or circumscribe his own freedom of advice to the crown by any pledge, expressed or implied: this motion was strongly supported by the honorable W. Lamb, its seconder, and Mr. Fawkes; while sir Samuel Romilly observed, 'that such a practice, by destroying all ministerial responsibility, would render his majesty accountable to the people, as acting solely by his own authority; that it would annihilate the maxim, which declares 'the king can do no wrong;' a predicament, in which his best friends could not wish to involve him.' Of both parties Mr. Ord spoke in very strong language:—'He approved,' he said, 'of the measures of the late ministers, and sincerely regretted their dismissal from office: that regret would have perhaps been lighter, had they been succeeded by men of talent or abilities: but were not their successors the dregs of a disgraced administration? were they not persons who had once held the seals of office for a few hours, and carried them back in acknowledgment of their own incapacity?'

Mr. Canning rose in reply to lord Howick, who had made some unjustifiable assertions injurious to lord Eldon's political character; and the conclusion of his speech, which commenced at a late hour, was received with loud and reiterated cheers on all sides. After expressing his horror at the audacity of members who wished to bring their sovereign to the bar of that house; and having entered into a vindication of lord Eldon's visits to Windsor;² he justified the mandate of dismissal, as a necessary consequence of absurd and arrogant conduct; concluding with the following declaration:—'Whatever may be the issue of the division this night, or of the series of divisions, with which, if successful, it is to be followed; his majesty's ministers

² Sir Samuel Romilly in his Diary (vol. iii. p. 104), says lord Grey told him, that, in the spring of 1813, lord chancellor Eldon, speaking on the subject of the Princess of Wales to lord Grey who was then sitting by him on the woolsack, said as follows: 'I do assure you—you may believe it or not as you think proper—but I do assure you, that when I had the conference with the king in 1807, which I requested, it was solely for the purpose of representing to him what mischief might follow, if Perceval was not prevented from publishing the book which he was then bent on publishing.'

CHAP.
XLVIII.

1807.

are determined to stand by their sovereign, even though circumstances should occur, in which they may find it their duty to appeal to the country. Dr. Duigenan and Mr. Perceval poured forth, on this occasion, a torrent of zeal in favor of the protestant establishment; laboring to show that its destruction was certain, if intolerance were abated, and a dominant party deprived of their monopoly of civil privileges. On a division, the opposers of the court found themselves in a minority; reckoning only 226 votes against 258. When the marquis of Stafford submitted a similar motion to the peers, it was warmly and ably supported; but the new ministry defeated it by a majority of eighty-one votes: and when Mr. Lyttleton urged the commons to express their disapprobation of the late change, and to intimate the necessity of a firm and efficient administration, the motion was rejected by a majority of forty-six.

As ministers however were not much elated by the strength which they possessed in the lower house, Mr. Canning's threat was soon put into execution: in the speech which announced the prorogation of the two houses, his majesty referred to the indulgences which his Roman catholic subjects had received during his reign, as proofs of his attachment to the principles of a just and enlightened toleration; a hope being expressed, that the divisions, excited by unnecessary agitation of a question of religious policy, would quickly pass away: with regard to himself, he was so fully convinced of the rectitude of his motives, that he had no doubt of his people's readiness to support him in such an exercise of his prerogative, as agreed with the sacred obligations under which he held his crown: thus influenced, he ordered, on the twenty-ninth of April, a dissolution of the parliament; when both the pulpit and the press were enlisted in the cause of administration; and so successfully was the cry of 'the church in danger!' excited, that no member of the late cabinet, except Mr. Thomas Grenville, resumed his seat in the house of commons for the place which he had before represented. This present year saw the

most talented member of that cabinet, and one destined to play a remarkable part on the political arena, placed in the upper house, by the decease of his father, earl Grey. For nearly twenty years lord Howick had been a distinguished member of the lower house, where one of his earliest efforts consisted in originating a motion for that parliamentary reform which he lived to carry as prime minister. It has been observed, that public men rarely prove equally successful as orators in both houses of parliament; which circumstance probably arises, not so much from any inherent difference in the qualifications required for either, as from the fact that a majority of those who have been eminent in the lower house, are transferred to the upper at a late period of life, when ambition has become cooled, and the power of moving the passions is abated: this, however, was not the case with lord Grey, who was now only thirty-seven years of age, and fully qualified by ability, study, and experience, to take a leading position among the peers of Great Britain. He commenced a long career as an eminent leader of opposition; for probably no statesman ever lived who was less inclined to compromise honestly-formed opinions for the possession of place and power.

The new parliament was opened on the twenty-second of June, and the king's speech delivered by commission on the twenty-sixth, when the result of the elections, on occasion of the address, was looked to with intense anxiety. Opposition had mustered, on the twenty-fourth, at Willis's rooms, to the number of 180, peers and commoners; and the unusual attendance of 505 members of the lower house, to hear the speech, and vote on the amendment, seemed as if both sides felt a presentiment, that the question was not merely possession of power by the present ministers, but a kind of hereditary accession to it by the dynasty of a party. The late dissolution was the agitated question, on which Mr. Wyndham spoke with peculiar energy: after arguing the question generally, and maintaining, that to dissolve parliament during a

CHAP.
XLVIII.
1807.

CHAP.
XLVIII.

1807.

session, was always unconstitutional, and often impolitic; he asked, 'What was the expediency of the measure in the present instance; when it gave rise to the inconveniences of a general election, with all the injury to private property, and all the detriment to public morals, which such an event was calculated to produce? For these inconveniences there should be a good justification: if the protestant religion was in danger, that would be a justification of the *measure*; if ministers thought it was in danger, that would be a justification of *them*: as to this cry of 'the church in danger!' he would put it to the right honorable gentleman himself, and ask him, if he believed it? The belief that every concession would be made to the catholics, was the sole ground on which he voted for the Irish union: that measure had infused genius and wisdom into the parliament of Great Britain; but these might well have flourished in their own sphere, and added to the patriotism and pride of their native land: in his opinion, nothing could have justified that union, but a confidence that every privilege could be more securely granted to the catholics by the united parliament, than by that of Ireland: this was the opinion of Mr. Pitt, Mr. Burke, and Mr. Fox, the most distinguished politicians that had adorned any country; and he would ask the noble secretary, who had been a party to all the plans of Mr. Pitt on this very subject, how he could join in any cry, that the church was in danger, from measures which fell far short of those which Mr. Pitt had in contemplation? As to the defence, which a right honorable gentleman had made for his silence in 1801, when the same, and, indeed, more extensive measures were proposed; it was the mere plea of a pleader, and could hardly be listened to with patience, even in those courts to which he had been accustomed: he was then in parliament, the friend of Mr. Pitt; and though the late measure did not go one-twentieth part so far as that which Mr. Pitt proposed, instead of considering him a betrayer of the protestant faith, he held him up as the only fit man in the country to consolidate and direct its

resources : the right honorable gentleman, however, considered this appeal to the people as having confirmed the truth of his opinions; an appeal indeed to their dormant prejudices, an advantage taken of the cry of 'No popery!' raised through the realm. What must one think of men who could resort to such means for supporting their influence? means by which they had incurred the contempt of all sober and thinking men! For two successive parliaments they had abdicated their claims, and in fact declared their incapacity for conducting the government; yet now they steal into power under the despicable cry of 'No popery!'

CHAP.
XLVIII.
1807.

Mr. Canning replied to the principal arguments urged by opposition; and alluded to the different accounts given of the late change in administration: at one time honorable gentlemen stated that they had voluntarily retired from office; and at another, had waited till they were forced to abandon their places: they might choose which of these cases they liked best, but he could not let them take to themselves both the grace of resignation and the grievance of dismissal: the latter however was the fact: they had stuck with great obstinacy to their situations; and a main objection to his friends seemed to be, that they wanted that first quality of a great statesman, tenacity of place: the amendments were negatived both in the upper and lower house, by majorities of 160 to 67, and 350 to 155, respectively; and this advantage over their opponents the new ministry kept during the session.

A new military plan was now introduced by lord Castlereagh, for increasing the regular army from the militia regiments, and for supplying the deficiencies thus occasioned by a supplementary militia. A bill was introduced by the Irish secretary, sir Arthur Wellesley, for suppressing insurrection, and preventing the disturbance of the peace in that country: also one was passed to prevent improper persons from keeping arms: another measure of sir Arthur's Irish administration, to be remembered by the inhabitants of Dublin with gratitude, though it met with much opposition at

CHAP.
XLVIII.

1807.

the time, was the establishment of a well organised body of police in that metropolis. An address was carried in the commons, on the motion of Mr. Bankes, praying his majesty not to make any grant of an office in reversion till six weeks after the commencement of the ensuing session: the subject of the finance committee, more than any other, brought the leaders of each party into collision; and Mr. Canning's speech, on this occasion, was a bitter and galling attack on the late administration. In speaking of the affairs of Buenos Ayres, he commented on the great change which appeared in their sentiments regarding that colony:— 'When its conquest first took place, they did not think it worthy of being mentioned in the king's speech; afterwards it acquired a vast importance in their eyes; and why? not from its utility to the commerce, navigation, or general resources of the country; but because it afforded scope for the appointment of collectors, comptrollers, searchers, and tide-waiters: this was a complete key to their policy; a happy illustration of their large and enlightened views: if it had been a government that had projected and accomplished extensive plans of conquest, we should have had collectors and comptrollers of the Bosphorus; with searchers and waiters at Rosetta. In answer to what a noble lord had said about newspapers, he would ask, was there no instance of a newspaper, (the Morning Chronicle) conspicuous for its attachment to the constitution, and the fairness of its details in all transactions in which its own party's interests had a place, whose proprietor was appointed secretary to the barrack-board, where the office of secretary was a new and a sinecure institution? how then could they tax the present ministers with partiality to newspapers? There was another act, which he regarded as a flagrant breach of the constitution; the grant of a pension of £400 a year during pleasure to a Scotch judge. [Lord Henry Petty said, across the table, he knew nothing about this matter.] The honorable gentlemen, when in power, were so united, that no difference of opinion

prevailed among them; when out, and charged with a job, they fled in all directions, and left it to light on what head it would.' CHAP.
XLVIII.
1807.

A speech, breathing such a spirit of scorn and defiance, naturally provoked retaliation. Mr. Curwen took up the taunt of the right honorable secretary, that 'there was no independent man in the house;' and asserted of himself, that he was so far independent, that he never had accepted a favor from any minister, and never would: could the right honorable secretary say as much? could he say that he did not at this time enjoy a pension? Mr. Canning, in reply, denied his having asserted that there were no independent men in the house; he had merely declared that party attachments were prevalent: as to the question just addressed to him, his answer was; that on retiring from the office of under-secretary for foreign affairs, Mr. Pitt and lord Grenville proposed to make a provision for him, which he had accepted; and they settled, by his desire, one half on himself, and the other half on two near and dear relations, dependent on his labors for their subsistence. This open avowal, instead of conciliating enmity, became a byword of reproach; and the expression, 'near and dear relations,' gave point to many sarcasms directed against sinecurists and pensioners: no man however had less right to complain of any want of delicacy in the manner or subject of an attack, than the right honorable secretary. Nothing of peculiar importance characterised the remainder of this session, which terminated on the fourteenth of August.

The late ministers had left the Prussian monarch to the chances of war: he seemed to be ruined, but his spirit was not subdued, when Bonaparte advanced, before the close of winter, in the hope of crushing him: the king was then at Memel; and his Russian allies, posting themselves at Prussian-Eylau, calmly awaited the attack of a superior force, after having sustained a severe reverse at Pultusk, which they had the effrontery to call a victory. The French in that action were commanded by Lannes; but on the eighth of

Campaign
of Bona-
parte.

CHAP.
XLVIII.

1807.

February, at Eylau, Napoleon with the main body of his army was present: both armies were drawn out by daybreak in battle array; and many were the vicissitudes of fortune in this sanguinary contest: the slaughter, which was immense on both sides, became still more frightful from the snow covering the ground; and which, continuing to fall on the wounded, dyed itself red with blood. The Russians had not yielded ground on the day of battle; but they had been dreadfully cut up, and had no succor at hand; while Bernadotte's fresh division was behind the main army of Napoleon: Beningsen therefore retreated next day; and the French emperor, having remained one week at Eylau, retired to occupy the line of the river Passarge; his head-quarters being at Osterode: thence he despatched offers of peace to the king of Prussia; while, on the other hand, he took measures for recruiting his army, and reducing Dantzic; which important city surrendered in May to general Léfèbvre, and added its name to his ducal title.

Reinforcements in the mean time had reached both armies; and after various skirmishes, they met at Friedland on the fourteenth of June; which Napoleon recollected to be the anniversary of Marengo: he welcomed the sound of the first cannon as the presage of victory; and the omen was fulfilled. Having formed his columns in the passes of the woods, he allowed Beningsen to cross the bridge of Friedland with the greater part of his army: the Russian did not suspect this manœuvre; but the French columns, issuing from the forest, and placing their cannon in position, soon convinced him that he must fight at a disadvantage, without the possibility of retreat: he instantly drew out his line, resting his left on the bridge; to which point Napoleon of course directed his principal attack to cut off the army: Ney led it; but his column was routed: Dupont supported him, and rallied the troops; but Napoleon thought fit to achieve victory with his artillery, which was brought to bear from many points on the enemy, concentrated as they were and formed in squares: heavy charges of cavalry filled up the

pauses which occurred in the roaring of the cannon; and at length, towards evening, after the Russians had suffered severely, and many of their squares were broken, the French infantry advanced to the charge, and completed their defeat. As the bridge was raked by artillery, no retreat lay that way: the Russian troops therefore plunged into the river; and thousands, encumbered with their accoutrements, perished in addition to those who lay on the field of battle: such was the decisive victory gained by the genius of Napoleon; and Friedland, like Marengo, enabled him to dictate humiliating terms of peace to a mighty empire.

CHAP.
XLVIII.
1807.

Königsburg now surrendered: Beningsen had retreated beyond the Niemen; but the French soon reached its banks in pursuit: the Russians demanded an armistice; and it was conceded; while preparations were made for an interview between the emperors, on a raft moored in mid stream: there they met, embraced, and conversed for a considerable time in sight of their armies on the opposite banks. The autocrat, having expressed resentment against our ministry, who had departed from the Pitt system of subsidies, the sentiment was so agreeable to Bonaparte, that he replied; —‘in that case, the conditions of their treaty would easily be settled.’ On the following day, Alexander crossed the river to Tilsit; and the two emperors were soon on terms of equality and friendship: but not so the unfortunate monarch of Prussia, who arrived as a suppliant and was treated by his conqueror with extreme harshness and disrespect: even the czar, won by the talents and ascendancy of Napoleon, felt a diminution of sympathy for his late ally; the presence of whose lovely queen could not counteract these new predilections of the one, or soften the premeditated rigor of the other.

On the seventh of July, peace was concluded between France and Russia on the following conditions: the provinces to be returned to Prussia were fixed: Russia recognised the duchy of Warsaw, consisting of South Prussia as before, and a part of West Prussia, under the king of Saxony: Dantzic was declared a free city:

Peace of
Tilsit.

CHAP.
XLVIII.

1807.

a part of New East Prussia was ceded to Russia; which power recognised Joseph Bonaparte as king of Naples, Louis king of Holland, and Jerome also as monarch of the newly erected kingdom of Westphalia. Alexander consented to acknowledge the confederation of the Rhine, even in its future enlargements, on notice being given; he also concluded an armistice with the Porte, consenting to receive the mediation of France: Napoleon accepted in return the mediation of Russia with England; if that country should desire it within a month after ratification of the present treaty. In a secret article,³ Russia entered into an agreement to make common cause with France, in case England should reject the peace, and refuse to acknowledge the freedom of the sea; to require the courts of Copenhagen, Stockholm, and Lisbon to do the same; and finally to declare war against Great Britain.

The peace with Prussia, concluded two days afterwards, by which about half its territory was returned as a gift of charity, reduced this nation to a state of the second rank: the contemptuous treatment, in addition to this oppression, which its monarch had to bear, seemed to justify a suspicion, that the conqueror's wish was to drive him into the resistance of despair, and then treat him as he had treated the Neapolitan monarch, by declaring that 'the house of Brandenburg had ceased to reign.'

The conditions of peace were as follow: Prussia received back the territories which she was not required to resign. She ceded, and left to the disposition of the French emperor,—first, all her possessions between the Elbe and the Rhine; secondly, the circle of Cotbuss annexed to Saxony; thirdly, all her Polish provinces acquired since 1773, of which the duchy of Warsaw was formed, also consigned to Saxony; fourthly, the city and territory of Dantzic. Her monarch recognised the three brothers of Napoleon as kings; and the formation of the kingdom of Westphalia from the ceded Prussian and other provinces: all

³ See *Moniteur*, July 8, 1812.

Prussian harbors and countries were to remain closed, till peace should take place, against British trade and navigation; while the Prussian fortresses were not to be evacuated before payment of a contribution of 112,000,000 of francs: this was afterwards arbitrarily augmented to 140,000,000; and Dantzic, though a free city, was forced to receive a French garrison. The peace of Tilsit restored quiet, together with the lost province of Moldavia, to the Porte; though a future scheme for dismembering that empire, and distributing its spoils to Russia, France, and Austria was agreed to, but postponed. The only crowned head of continental Europe which did not bow down to Napoleon, was that of Gustavus IV. king of Sweden: he was in consequence soon dispossessed of Stralsund and Swedish Pomerania: Sweden, perhaps, deserved the enmity of Bonaparte; but to plot against Spain, which had sacrificed its whole navy in his cause, and whose army was even now engaged for him in the north, was atrocious in the highest degree: this conduct however, met with its deserved punishment.

The stipulations of Tilsit, avowed or secret, were nothing less than a league to enchain the world: annihilating Prussia, menacing Spain and Sweden with a similar fate, and tending prospectively to the ruin of Turkey and Austria, they ultimately aimed at the subjugation of a power, which was destined to become the avenger of humiliated thrones.

In the mean time, the naval force of that power was supreme: Napoleon was unable to oppose this on its own element; but imagining that he could wield against it, indirectly, his supremacy by land, he formed a grand plan to exclude British ships and commerce from all European ports. Immediately after the battle of Jena came forth the first act of proscription: the Russian and Prussian monarchs now lent their direct aid to this scheme, discontinuing, by public manifestos, all communication with Great Britain; and great was the mixture of surprise and disgust felt by the British senate and nation, when 'the magnanimous Alexander' thus became the humble slave of Napoleon.

CHAP.
XLVIII.
1807.

Expedition
to Copen-
hagen.

CHAP.
XLVIII.

1807.

His manifesto was answered in a state paper, drawn up by Mr. Canning, which is considered a masterpiece in that species of composition. The Berlin decree had been met, on the seventh of January, by the late ministers, with a retaliatory order of council, which was complained of by the Danish envoy: to this lord Howick replied; and vindicated the principle in dispute with great clearness, firmness, and moderation. 'His majesty,' he said, 'would, unquestionably, have been justified in resorting to the fullest measures of retaliation, in consequence of such unparalleled aggression; and other powers would have had no right to complain, if the king had immediately proceeded to declare every country occupied by the enemy in a state of blockade, and to prohibit all trade in its produce; for, as the French decree itself expresses it, the law of nature justifies us in employing against an enemy the same arms of which he makes use: if third parties suffer from those measures, their demand of reparation must be made to that country which first violated the established usages of war, and the rights of neutral states.' The present ministry followed up the system of protection and retaliation; and first signalled their administration by that equivocal measure, the bombardment of Copenhagen, and seizure of the Danish fleet. Engaged in deadly struggle with a power that recognised no obligation or restraint, our government was soon obliged in some degree to unfetter itself, and commit acts which nothing but the imperious necessity of national defence could excuse; for it is a melancholy consideration, that in political affairs the energy requisite to ensure success must sometimes trespass on the strict limits of justice. The unscrupulous policy of Napoleon, and the schemes which transpired at Tilsit, left no doubt that he would, whenever it suited his purposes, occupy Denmark; which country, like Holland, was unable to resist or withhold its resources from France: it was determined therefore to anticipate him; for which purpose the British cabinet despatched an armament of 20,000 troops under lord Cathcart, accompanied by a power-

ful fleet commanded by admiral Gambier. When intelligence of this expedition arrived at Copenhagen, its inhabitants generally supposed that the armament was intended to co-operate with the Swedes in Pomerania: such an illusion however was soon dispelled by the arrival of an envoy early in August, who was instructed to require that the Danish fleet should be delivered up to the British admiral, under a solemn agreement for its restoration, whenever peace should be concluded between England and France: in case of refusal, the prince royal was to be informed that the British commanders would immediately proceed to hostilities. An independent sovereign could scarcely listen to such conditions: a dignified, but determined answer therefore was given to our proposals, and Mr. Jackson quitted the capital.

On the 16th of August the English troops landed without opposition; and, after some ineffectual attempts to impede their progress, Copenhagen was closely invested on the land side; the fleet forming an impenetrable blockade by sea: a proclamation was at the same time issued by lord Cathcart, notifying to the inhabitants of Zealand the motives of the expedition, and the conduct that would be observed toward them; with an assurance, that whenever the demands of his Britannic majesty were complied with, hostilities would cease. On the twenty-sixth, sir Arthur Wellesley was despatched with a force to disperse the Danish forces rapidly assembling under general Cartenchild; which service he effectually performed: on the evening of the second of September, the land batteries and bomb vessels opened a tremendous fire on the town; and, in a very short time, a general conflagration appeared to have taken place. As no proposals for capitulation arrived on the two ensuing days, the firing, which had considerably slackened, was vigorously renewed on the evening of the fourth; and next morning the commandant of the garrison sent a flag of truce; a capitulation having been settled on the eighth, the British army took

CHAP.
XLVIII

1807.

possession of the citadel, dockyards, and batteries; engaging to restore them, and evacuate the island of Zealand, at the expiration of six weeks, or sooner if possible: no requisitions were made; no military excesses were committed; and the police of the city was regulated by the Danish magistrates. The British admiral immediately began to rig and fit out the ships laid up in ordinary; of which sixteen were of the line, fifteen frigates, six brigs, and twenty-five gun-boats: at the expiration of the term limited in the capitulation, they were all, together with stores, timber, and other articles of naval equipment found in the arsenal, conveyed to England; with the exception of one line-of-battle ship, which grounded on the isle of Huen, and was destroyed.

As the duty of self-preservation had instigated us to brave all reproaches in seizing the naval force of Denmark, good policy might have taught us to go a step further and keep possession of Copenhagen, as long as circumstances rendered it necessary; for as soon as our fleet left that capital, a number of armed vessels commenced depredations on our traders in the Baltic with considerable success; British property was confiscated throughout the Danish dominions; correspondence with England was strictly prohibited; and war declared. As all Europe exclaimed loudly against the apparent outrage that had been committed, his Britannic majesty ordered a declaration to be published in justification of the motives which dictated the expedition: in this it was stated, 'that the king had received positive information of the determination made by the ruler of France to occupy, with a military force, the territory of Holstein, for the purpose of excluding Great Britain from her accustomed channels of continental communication; of inducing or compelling the court of Denmark to close the passage of the Sound against British navigation; and of employing Danish ships for the invasion of the British islands; farther, that, Holstein once occupied, Zealand would be at the mercy of France, and the

navy of Denmark at her disposal:’ the expedition therefore was considered justifiable as an act of self-preservation.

CHAP.
XLVIII.
1807.

This however did not prevent the emperor of Russia from fulfilling the conditions of his peace with Napoleon: the attack on Copenhagen became a pretext for complete separation from Great Britain; while some injuries sustained by his vessels induced him to issue a declaration on the thirty-first of October, in which he not only upbraided this country for deserting her continental allies, and sending her forces on self-interested expeditions to other parts of the globe, instead of making a diversion in favor of those that were shedding their blood in the common cause; but accused her of breaking faith and precise terms of treaties, by troubling at sea the commerce of his subjects. He then proclaimed afresh the armed neutrality of Catharine; demanded satisfaction for his own people; and declared that he would not resume terms of amity with this country unless full reparation were made to Denmark.

We must now advert briefly to those expeditions which excited the indignation of our late ally. Toward the close of 1806, England, desirous of compelling the Porte to accommodate her dispute with Russia, and at the same time irritated by that influence which the French minister had acquired with the sultan, despatched a fleet to the Levant, under sir John Duckworth, with orders to force the passage of the Dardanelles, anchor before Constantinople, and bombard that city, unless certain conditions were complied with: accordingly, the British admiral appeared off the entrance of the strait, and was of course opposed: a passage however was attempted, and the fleet sailed through, in defiance of the fire from the forts of Sestos and Abydos. At the same time, sir Sidney Smith directed his efforts against a squadron, that was unable to withstand the superiority of British skill and valor: a battery, which, if completed, might have defended the Turkish vessels, was stormed by a party of marines; and a ship of the line being driven

Hostilities
against
Turkey.

CHAP.
XLVIII.

1807.

toward the shore, was set on fire: four frigates also and three corvettes were burned. Passing in apparent triumph through the sea of Marmora into the Bosphorus, sir John Duckworth sent a letter to the Reis-Effendi, demanding a declaration of the sultan's views; whether he was determined to espouse the cause of France, or to renew his ancient terms of amity with Great Britain, and second her efforts in opposing the tyranny of Napoleon; requiring, in the former case, an immediate surrender of the Turkish navy. Had Selim been left to the counsels only of his own divan, when a British fleet was in sight of his seraglio, there can be little doubt what answer would have been returned; but the French minister Sebastiani, was a gallant soldier, and a man of great talent: he therefore inspired the sultan with confidence, and persuaded him to enter into negotiations: in the mean time, he directed the efforts of the population in fortifying all the approaches to Constantinople; and when our arbitrary proposals were rejected, the wind and current, as he had foreseen, prevented the hostile fleet from attaining such a position as would enable it effectually to bombard the city: the British admiral therefore was obliged to hasten his departure, while it was still practicable; nor did he repossess the Dardanelles, without sustaining considerable loss from the fire of the castles. Thus far however Russia had no great cause to complain of the zeal of Great Britain; though the latter power, instead of producing an accommodation between the courts of St. Petersburg and Constantinople, contrived to add a new enemy to her own list: indeed, her agents and settlers in Turkey were now exposed to considerable annoyance; sequestration of British property to a large extent in various quarters was promptly executed; and Sebastiani's influence became paramount in the divan.

Expedition
to Egypt.

To obtain some compensation, if our projects should be defeated before Constantinople, it was determined by lord Grenville's cabinet to send an expedition to subdue Egypt, and thus oppose one barrier at least to

the designs which Napoleon meditated against our oriental possessions; but as the British fleet set sail before the result of our negotiations with the Porte was known, this circumstance gave the enemy an opportunity of charging us with contemplating an iniquitous aggression; on the sixth of March, a force of 5000 men, under the command of major-general Mackenzie Fraser, departed from Messina, and effected a landing on the coast of Alexandria: a detachment, sent to seize and occupy the fort of Aboukir, succeeded in that attempt; and a manifesto, introduced by a friendly Arab among the Alexandrians, who were not disposed to defend the city, induced them to insist on a capitulation by the garrison. The facility with which this conquest was effected, prompted general Fraser to attempt the reduction of Rosetta, for the purpose of securing a regular supply of provisions for his troops: but the inhabitants of that town, unlike those of Alexandria, made an obstinate and effectual resistance; every house being used as a fortress, whence a constant fire was directed against the assailants; who were obliged to retire with great loss. About half the army was afterwards employed in the same service, and succeeded in driving its adversaries from the surrounding sand-hills into the town; but all attempts to produce a surrender or an accommodation were fruitless; a retreat therefore became necessary; and the troops were obliged to fight their way back, under great disadvantages, to head-quarters; where they remained till September: the retention however of Alexandria, menaced with a siege by numerous forces collected from Cairo and other towns, soon became impracticable; and general Fraser, having obtained the release of every British prisoner, consented to evacuate Egypt, without having acquired any glory or advantage from the expedition.

Some hopes were entertained that these reverses in the Mediterranean might be compensated by successes in the South Atlantic ocean. In October 1806, a reinforcement had been sent to the Rio de la Plata, under sir Samuel Auchmuty; who, on arriving at

Disasters
in South
America.

CHAP.
XLVIII.

1807.

Maldonado, determined to attack the strong post of Monte Video, the key to the navigation of that immense river: on the fourteenth of January, 4000 troops were landed, who repulsed a superior force of the enemy: a battery was then thrown up, by which a practicable breach was effected on the second of February; and an assault was ordered for the next morning, an hour before day-break: the enemy, in the mean time, had so completely barricaded the breach with hides, that the assailing forces could not in the dark distinguish it from the wall; and they were obliged to remain for a quarter of an hour under a galling fire, until it was discovered by captain Renny, who fell gloriously as he mounted it with his men: the survivors however rushed into the town with an impetuosity that overcame every obstacle; the cannon at the head of the principal avenues were overturned; the streets were cleared by the bayonet; and before noon, both town and castle remained in our possession: fifty-seven vessels, of war and trade, were captured; and a sloop, laden with treasure, was blown up during the assault.

The hopes of success, however, excited by this acquisition, were blighted by subsequent rashness and misconduct: on the fourteenth of June, general Crauford, arriving at Monte Video with a force of 4200 men, which had been turned from its original destination against Chili, found lieutenant-general White-locke, who had brought 1600 troops from England, with orders to assume the chief command of an expedition to recover Buenos Ayres: the appointment of this officer, who was equally disqualified for military command and judicious negotiation, reflected little credit on ministerial judgment. When the Spanish governor intimated a desire of accommodation, the British general arrogantly demanded that all the civil officers should be deemed prisoners of war; and thus destroyed every hope of a successful treaty. In surveying Monte Video, after his embarkation, he had remarked the flat roofs and parapets by which each house could be turned into a kind of fortress; yet,

when he arrived before Buenos Ayres, he rushed blindly into danger from neglecting to profit by his own observation: having nearly surrounded the city, he ordered that a general attack should be made on the fifth of July, and that the different divisions should march through the streets to certain points with unloaded muskets: but no plan could have been less adapted to the nature of a town composed of houses like those already described; with regular streets intersecting each other at right angles: volleys of grape-shot were poured on our advancing columns in front and flank; while they were destroyed by hand-grenades, and every other species of missiles from the housetops. The service, under these terrible disadvantages, was executed with uncommon intrepidity, but with a loss of 2500 men in killed, wounded, and prisoners; and sir Samuel Auchmuty succeeded in gaining possession of the Plaza de Toros, in which he captured eighty-two pieces of cannon and immense stores: the commander-in-chief however neither properly superintended the process of attack, nor supported the battalions that required his assistance: Crauford, therefore, with his brigade, was cut off from all communication with the other columns, and obliged to surrender; as also was a detachment under lieutenant-colonel Duff. Surrounded with foes, Whitelocke readily consented to treat with the Spanish commandant; and not only agreed to evacuate the town on condition of recovering his own prisoners, and those taken from general Beresford; but to give up Monte Video, with every other place on the Rio de la Plata, held by British troops, within the space of two months: a result like this of course brought the general to a court-martial, by which he was sentenced to be cashiered; not for prohibiting his troops to fire, but for a deficiency of zeal, judgment, and personal exertion. Such were the unfortunate expeditions, which gave to our late imperial ally a pretext for accusing this country in his manifesto, as 'coolly contemplating a bloody war which' had been kindled at her will, while she sent troops to attack Buenos

CHAP.
XLVIII.

1807.

Ayres; and as despatching from Sicily another army, which appeared destined to make a diversion in Italy, to the African coast, for the purpose of seizing and appropriating Egypt to herself: his declaration however was answered on the eighteenth of December by a spirited reply on the part of the British government; and an order of council was issued, granting letters of marque and reprisal against Russian vessels. Against the bad success of our expeditions, the solitary acquisition of the Dutch colony of Curaçao is to be recorded; which surrendered on the first of January to a squadron of four frigates under commodore Brisbane.

French
invasion of
Portugal.

At this time Great Britain appeared to be at the lowest ebb of fortune, while her mighty antagonist had reached the zenith of his glory: such had been the end of all our expeditions and coalitions, that against these solitary islands almost all the civilised world stood in arms and indignation: every port and river of Europe was closed against our ships except the Tagus; and, in order to stop this last source of British commerce, Bonaparte despatched Junot in October, to seize the dominions of our oldest ally. Yet, victorious as he now appeared, England still wore an undaunted aspect; and the policy adopted by her government, notwithstanding blunders, losses, and disappointments, ensured her final success. The army of 30,000 men sent by Napoleon against Portugal must necessarily pass through Spain: that country was now ruled by a minion of the queen, Emanuel Godoy, surnamed 'the prince of the Peace;' who, from a soldier in the body-guard, had been raised to the distinguished station of prime minister: even this man could feel for that degradation to which his country had been long subjected by the cruel exactions of the French emperor; and in a fit of patriotism, had published a warlike proclamation to the Spaniards, which he thought proper to withdraw as soon as the result of the battle of Jena was made public: he now felt anxious to ingratiate himself with Bonaparte, who thought him a proper instrument to forward his de-

signs: accordingly a treaty was negotiated between them at Fontainebleau, by which Portugal was to be subdued; its northern provinces to be given to the king of Etruria, who had lately been expelled from his own states by France; and its southern bestowed in sovereignty on Godoy; the central portion, including Lisbon, being left nominally to the house of Braganza, but occupied by French troops for the purpose of excluding British commerce: yet even this did not constitute all Napoleon's scheme, which comprehended the whole of the peninsula; and in order to accomplish it, he formed a second army at Bayonne, under pretence of sending reinforcements to Junot. In the mean time, that commander entered Portugal; and on the twenty-sixth of November, advanced to Abrantes, within three days' march of Lisbon: the *Moniteur* had already announced 'that the house of Braganza had ceased to reign;' and as if to fulfil this imperial edict, the royal family embarked on board a British fleet, and set sail for the Brazils on the thirtieth; Junot's advanced guard arriving in time to fire a few cannon shots at the retiring vessels: thus, while the continental system was raised to exclude British commerce from Europe, a direct intercourse was established between England and Brazil, forming a new epoch in our commercial prosperity.

The British order in council of the seventh of January, prohibiting neutrals from trading to any port in the possession, or under control of the enemy, not having answered the desired purpose, additional orders were issued on the eleventh of November, declaring every port from which England was excluded, to be in a state of blockade; all trade in its produce illegal, and all vessels engaged in it liable to capture: and though the Americans might still trade with the enemy's colonies for articles of their own consumption, the double necessity was imposed on their intercourse between France and her colonies, of calling at a British port, and paying a British duty. To avoid the losses and hostilities apprehended from such measures of the two great belligerent powers, congress, on the twenty-second of December, laid a strict embargo on all

CHAP.
XLVIII.
1807.

British
order in
council.

CHAP.
XLVIII.

1807.

Milan
decree.

American vessels, by which they were prohibited from leaving their ports; while the ships of all other nations were ordered to quit the harbors of the United States, with or without cargoes, as soon as they received notification of the act: this intelligence greatly alarmed commercial men; and the merchants of Liverpool, thinking that the act of congress proceeded from our orders of council, petitioned for their abrogation; but in vain. Bonaparte, firm in his purpose to harass our commerce, determined to persevere in a system, which eventually hurled him from his throne; and, on the twenty-third of November, issued his celebrated Milan decree, enacting 'that all vessels entering a port of France, after having touched at England, were to be seized and confiscated, with their cargoes, without exception or distinction: ' this interdict was succeeded, on the nineteenth of December, by a rejoinder to our late orders in council; declaring, 'that every neutral, which submitted to be searched by an English ship, or which paid any duty to the British government, should, in consequence, become liable to seizure, as a lawful prize, by French ships of war.' Neutral powers were thus placed between two fires: if they entered a French port, without first paying a duty on their cargoes in England, they were subjected to capture by British cruisers; and if they touched at England for that purpose, they became subject to confiscation in the ports of France: the case was one of extreme hardship, occasioning severe scrutiny and animated discussions, among British as well as foreign politicians.

Disputes
with
America.

But, in addition to the irritation proceeding from our orders in council, another unfortunate subject of dispute arose between this country and the United States. On the twenty-third of June, the Leopard man-of-war, captain Humphries, acting under the orders of admiral Berkley, fell in with the Chesapeake American frigate, off Virginia, and demanded some British deserters known to be on board: on her captain's refusal to permit a search, the Leopard fired a broadside, killing and wounding several men; after which the American struck his colors. In consequence

of this transaction, the president issued a proclamation, ordering every British ship of war to quit the harbors of the United States; and, in a message to congress, on the twenty-seventh of October, he stated that satisfaction for the outrage had been demanded of Great Britain: in the mean time, an investigation of the transaction took place at Halifax; when one of our deserters taken from the Chesapeak was condemned by a court-martial, and executed. Ministers did not hesitate to declare in parliament their readiness to make reparation for whatever might appear to be an unauthorised act of aggression; and, in a proclamation, to recall British seamen, it was stated that force might, if necessary, be exerted for recovering deserters on board the merchant vessels of neutrals; but that with respect to ships of war, a requisition only should be adopted: thus the conduct of our admiral was tacitly disavowed; and a special envoy was despatched to America with overtures of conciliation, which however, proved abortive.

CHAP.
XLVIII.
1807.

In March, this year, the great earl St. Vincent, yielding at length to declining years and bodily infirmities, gave notice to the admiralty of his intention finally to strike his flag: he had now done all that he was anxious to do when he re-entered into active service at so advanced an age: he had corrected abuses, and reformed those negligent slovenly habits by which he found his fleet infected:⁵ he had promoted many excellent young officers, and brought under notice those among their seniors whom his quick and experienced eye saw fitted for command: he had recommended numerous improvements in our ships, and their cruising grounds, in our system of pilotage, in our harbors, docks and yards, and many other departments; nor had he neglected either excellent advice or practice regarding the health and comfort of the common sailors: added to this, he had laid open to our authorities the vast sources of his political information;

⁵ 'It would have the appearance of puffing (he observes to lord Howick, vol. ii. p. 293) if I were to detail the change which has taken place here, and throughout the fleet under my command, since I was last placed at the head of it.'

CHAP.
XLVIII.

1807.

in return for which he received acknowledgements of the most sincere and gratifying kind from the admiralty on his retirement;⁶ while the gratitude of the honest tars on board his own superb vessel (the *Hibernia*) was shown by the present of an union flag, of the richest silk and finest workmanship which could be procured from the British loom.

In August died the last descendant of the unfortunate family of Stuart, cardinal York, who styled himself Henry IX. king of England: but he was never forward in urging his pretensions to the British throne; his character being that of a quiet, inoffensive person: having been reduced to great distress by the French usurpations, he had of late years received an annual pension of £4000 from the bounty of George III.

On the second of November, Louis XVIII. king of France, landed at Yarmouth, under the title of count de Lille, accompanied by their royal highnesses the ducs de Berri and d'Angoulême, with several emigrant noblemen. M. le comte de Lille received his majesty's invitation to take up his residence in any part of Great Britain, during his stay in this country.

The Danish West-Indian islands of St. Thomas, St. John, and St. Croix surrendered in December, without resistance, to a British squadron under sir Alexander Cochrane.

⁶ See two letters on this subject in the Appendix.

CHAPTER XLIX.

GEORGE III. (CONTINUED.)—1808.

Affairs of Spain—Napoleon's designs on the crown of that country—How accomplished—Resistance of the Spanish people—Joseph Bonaparte made king of Spain—His retreat from Madrid, in consequence of the surrender of Dupont's army—Spanish deputies arrive in England—The cause of Spain taken up by the British government—Different views taken of it—Meeting of the British parliament—Debates on the expedition to Copenhagen—Censures provoked by Mr. Canning—Peter Plymley's letters—Roman catholic petition—Motion respecting the droits of admiralty—Mutiny bill, and local militia—Finances, &c.—Mode to reduce the national debt—Bill against the grant of offices in reversion—Alterations in the criminal law—Also in the Scotch courts of justice—Act to prevent distillation from grain—Discussion of Spanish affairs—Prorogation of parliament—Contest between Russia and Sweden—Changes effected by Napoleon in the state of continental affairs, and of France—Operations of the British fleet in the Mediterranean—Conduct of lord Collingwood—Statistical summary of British affairs since the peace of Amiens—Affairs of Portugal, to the convention of Cintra—Articles of that treaty—Court of inquiry, &c.—State of Spain—Plans of Napoleon—Meeting of sovereigns at Erfurth, &c.—Bonaparte's advance into Spain—Sir John Moore's campaign—Battle of Corunna, &c.

ABOUT the time that Junot occupied Portugal Napoleon sent a second army across the Pyrenees, under Dupont, which established itself on the Douro: a third allowed it on the first of January this year, and all the disposable forces of the French empire seemed ready to inundate the peninsula. It must be confessed, that the state of mental imbecility and moral degradation into which the reigning family of Spain had fallen, as a strong temptation to dispossess them of a throne which they had rendered so contemptible; but a more

Affairs of
Spain.

CHAP.
XLIX.

1808.

imprudent step was never taken by a statesman, than that which led Napoleon to the violent usurpation of an allied kingdom, the whole resources of which were already at his disposal: such an outrageous attack on public faith and personal honor disclosed to every European state his ultimate designs, alienating friends, inspiring foes with confidence, and rousing the spirit of human nature itself to re-assert its rights: this unwise policy was clearly perceived by Talleyrand, but that sagacious minister was at this time out of favor; the evil star of Napoleon was rising; and the baneful meteor, which had so long affrighted the nations, was to be extinguished, though in blood.

The object of Bonaparte's invasion of Spain was long considered a political enigma; but the true solution is given in the pages of Bourrienne. Without doubt, he was anxious to place this ancient crown on the head of a member of his own family: but why? because he depended on such an instrument to pursue rigorously and implicitly the continental system, which was intended to overthrow the power that stopped him in the career of his ambition: the following observation, made by Napoleon to Duroc, the truth of which there is not the slightest reason to question, discloses the whole of his design:—'I am no longer anxious that Joseph should be king of Spain; and he himself is indifferent about it. I would give the crown to the first comer who would shut his ports against the English.' From the contemplation of this profligate measure, we must now turn to the means adopted for its execution.

Long before the French invasion, the imbecile family on the Spanish throne had been distracted by domestic quarrels; under cover of which, artful and designing persons pursued their own plans, while they pretended an interest for the parties whose cause they espoused. The country, as before has been observed, was governed, under the name of Charles IV. by Don Manuel Godoy, who had been raised to his high station by the queen's favor: nor was the influence which this person possessed with the king much less

than that exercised by him over her majesty; which circumstances will account for the hatred with which he was regarded by Ferdinand; prince of the Asturias, and heir apparent to the throne; in whose sentiments the Spanish nobility and people, already disgusted by Godoy's subserviency to Napoleon, largely participated. In order to counteract the support which the favorite received from the court of France, Ferdinand was persuaded, in October 1807, to address a letter to the emperor, lamenting the influence which bad men had acquired over his father; soliciting the interference of 'that hero, whom Providence had raised up for the safety of Europe, and the support of thrones;' and requesting the honor of an alliance with his family by marriage: finally, he desired that this communication might be kept secret, lest his parents should consider it a proof of disrespect. Though the prince received no answer to his letter, the secret seems to have transpired; for at the end of the month he was arrested on a charge of designing to dethrone his father and assassinate his mother: as a traitor of this stamp, he was denounced by the Spanish monarch himself to Napoleon, who rejoiced in such a pretext for decisive interference in the domestic policy of the nation.

We have already noticed a convention made with the Spanish court and Godoy regarding Portugal, which enabled Napoleon to mask his ulterior intentions against Spain, and to introduce large bodies of troops into that country without exciting any strong suspicions. The prince of Asturias, after some judicial proceedings, was liberated from confinement; and being absolved of his imputed crimes, wrote a submissive letter to his father, acknowledging his faults, but accusing certain persons, in his confidence, of instigating him to deeds which his own soul abhorred: the king however had spoken openly to the French ambassador about revoking the law of succession; and Napoleon's armies of reserve, amounting to more than 50,000 men, under general Dupont and marshal Moncey, had already advanced into Spain, and were encamped about Vittoria, Miranda, Valladolid, and Sala-

CHAP.
XLIX.

1808.

manca ; apparently following in the track of Junot's march ; but in reality cutting off the capital from communication with the northern provinces, and securing the direct road from Bayonne to Madrid: small divisions, under various pretexts, were constantly reinforcing these armies ; and 12,000 men under general Duhesme, penetrating into Catalonia, established themselves in Barcelona.

In the mean time, the quarrel between the monarch and his son, or rather between Godoy and the advisers of Ferdinand, was brought to a crisis in March, by insurrections at Aranjuez and Madrid. Occasional reports arose, that the obnoxious favorite had persuaded the old king and queen to transfer the seat of government to Mexico ; and at last preparations were made for their embarkation at Seville: during the commotion caused by this discovery, the palaces of the 'prince of the Peace' were sacked by the populace, and he himself with difficulty escaped its fury: on the eighteenth, Charles IV. terrified by such violent proceedings, abdicated his throne ; when Ferdinand was proclaimed king, amid the acclamations of the people: during these transactions, however, Murat, grand duke of Berg, who now commanded all the French forces in Spain, pushed forward marshal Moncey's corps, with a large body of cavalry, and took possession of Madrid ; while Dupont, deviating from his route to Portugal, occupied Segovia, the Escorial, and Aranjuez. The prince, when he arrived in the capital, on the twenty-fourth of March was not recognised in his royal character by Murat to whom Charles IV. declared, that the abdication had been forced on him: he also wrote in the same strain to the emperor. This state of affairs being unexpected by Napoleon, whose plans had been disarranged by the vehemence of the Spanish populace and the precipitate movement of Murat, he committed the management of them to Savary, duke of Rovigo by whom Ferdinand was induced to undertake a journey, for the purpose of obtaining an interview with the emperor at Bayonne. Having appointed a

supreme junta at Madrid, of which Murat was named a member, the prince set out, regardless of the entreaties, as well as the opposition of his subjects; and arrived at Bayonne on the eighteenth of April: thither also Charles IV. who had been reinstated on his throne by Murat's assistance, proceeded with his queen and Godoy, in order to place himself, his cause, and his kingdom, in the hands of Bonaparte: in the mean time, French troops had scattered themselves throughout the realm; and had been admitted without hesitation into the fortresses of St. Sebastian, Pampeluna, Figueras, and Monjuik, as well as into the citadel of Barcelona; and thus a proud, bigoted, irritable nation, was, in a moment of unsuspecting confidence, laid prostrate before an enemy who came under the guise of friendship. 'Fortunately,' says the able author of the Peninsular War, 'it is easier to oppress the people of any country, than to destroy their generous feelings; and when all patriotism is lost in the upper classes, it may still be found among the lower: in the peninsula it was not found; but it started into life with a fervor and energy that ennobled even the wild and savage form in which it appeared: nor was it less admirable, though it burst forth attended by many evils: the good policy displayed was the people's own; their cruelty, folly, and perverseness were the effects of a long course of misgovernment.'¹

Napoleon's great error in this aggression, was that of making the people his enemies. 'Had he,' as the author above quoted justly observes, 'before he openly meddled in their affairs, brought the people into hostile contact with their government; (and how many points would not such a government have offered!) instead of appearing as the treacherous arbitrator in a domestic quarrel, he would have been hailed as the deliverer of a great nation.'

The transactions which had already taken place regarding the royal family, and the movements of French troops now advancing on Madrid, soon roused the indignation of the Spaniards into active violence:

Insurrec-
tion at
Madrid.

¹ Colonel Napier's History of the Peninsular War, vol. i. p. 22.

CHAP.
XLIX.

1808.

on the second of May, a carriage having been prepared, as the people supposed, for removing to France Don Antonio, uncle of Ferdinand, and head of the supreme junta, a crowd collected together; when the traces were cut, and loud imprecations uttered against the invaders of Spain. This commotion soon spread over the whole city; and the French soldiers, expecting no violence, were slaughtered on all sides: above 700 fell; and even the hospital was attacked; but the attendants and sick men defended themselves against their assailants, until they were relieved by a body of cavalry and a corps of 3000 infantry under general Lanfranc, who dispersed the multitude, and captured several hundreds. In the first moment of irritation, Murat ordered these prisoners to be tried by a military commission, which condemned them to death; but at the intercession of the municipality of Madrid, he forbade any executions on the sentence: it is said, however, that general Grouchy, in whose immediate custody the prisoners remained, in order that the blood of French soldiers might not be shed with impunity, proceeded to shoot about forty in the Prado, before Murat could enforce his orders; and that about the same number were put to death by a colonel of the imperial guard, enraged at the loss of many choice troops in that superb corps, against which the fury of the Spaniards had been principally directed.² This affair was intirely accidental: yet policy induced both sides, not only to exaggerate the slaughter, but to attribute secret motives to their opponents: the French, knowing that the odious impression made by such a transaction on the minds of the people could not be effaced, endeavored to convey by it a terrible idea of their own power and severity; while the Spaniards used it as a means of exciting their countrymen throughout the provinces to rise in arms against their invaders: news of the commotion

* Colonel Napier clearly proves that this was not a wanton massacre, or even a barbarous stroke of policy on the part of the French; but that it was commenced by the Spaniards, whose fiery tempers, and irritation from passing events, rendered an explosion inevitable. There is also some doubt respecting this act of the colonel of the guard.

soon reached Bayonne, and had the effect of exasperating the emperor against Ferdinand; while its easy suppression seemed to argue, that Spain would be forced to submit to his will with as little difficulty as Naples. Charles IV. having reclaimed his crown in the presence of Napoleon, was, through Godoy's influence, induced to resign it in favor of the emperor: Ferdinand showed himself more stubborn; but his sire, and especially the queen, inveterate against a son whom she detested, aided Bonaparte's views with a blind rage that shocked even his mind: she accused the prince of premeditating the assassination of his parents, and threatened to declare him illegitimate unless he yielded to the emperor's wishes; nor were hints omitted, that he might meet the fate of d'Enghien: hence on the sixth of May the prince gave in his resignation; when, having played the part which the usurper required, he was sent, as well as the old king and queen, into the interior of France, to be kept in safe custody. In consequence of the cession made to him by Charles IV. Napoleon assumed the right of nomination to the vacant throne, and required that a king should be chosen out of his own family: according to directions issued, the council of Castile, together with the municipality and governing junta of Madrid, declared their choice to have fallen on Joseph Bonaparte; who arrived in June at Bayonne, where a number of Spanish nobles, denominated the assembly of notables, appeared, and accepted him as their sovereign; after which they proceeded to discuss the new constitution^a presented to them, and swore to maintain it. Murat was immediately sent to Naples; where he acted as a royal puppet in the place of Joseph.

CHAP.
XLIX.
1808.

Joseph
Bonaparte
created
king of
Spain.

The perils of this enterprise undertaken against his ally were not unforeseen by Napoleon: he was aware that a general insurrection might prove, in his own words, 'a cancer that would eat into the very heart of his empire;' but he hoped that the people would not rise. The Bourbon dynasty was neither

^a This was very similar to that of France, with an exception in favor of the dominant religion; no toleration of dissent from popery being allowed.

CHAP.
XLIX.

1808.

ancient nor glorious; and the Spanish attachment to Ferdinand was intirely the effect of chance: he had expressed the national wish in hating Godoy, and accordingly became identified with it: the insurrection completed his popularity; so that in overthrowing him, Napoleon insulted the nation, and provoked a contest which contributed to his own destruction. On the twentieth of July king Joseph made his entry into Madrid, and was proclaimed on the twenty-fourth: but his regal authority was confined to a small circle round the capital; and his only hope of success rested on his brother's arms: for what could the consent of an imbecile monarch and a few pusillanimous nobles avail against a nation arming its millions to oppose him? In Catalonia, in Valencia in Andalusia, Estremadura, Gallicia, and Asturias the people were now gathering, and fiercely proclaiming resistance to French intrusion; while all the cities, towns, and villages of the realm began to present spectacles of mingled patriotism and atrocity that were at once inspiring and appalling. Horrible barbarities were committed on those French soldiers whom sickness or the fortune of war exposed to popular vengeance: nor were native Spaniards treated with less mercy, however high their rank or authority who hesitated to embark in the horrors of what then appeared a hopeless contest; or who interfered to prevent the sacrifices which their infuriated countrymen demanded. By a precaution which showed long premeditation in Napoleon's mind, the flower of the Spanish forces had been marched to the north of Europe, and placed under the command of Bernadotte: but the void thus left was expeditiously filled and insurgent armies started up in all parts of the peninsula. In its northern provinces, indeed, where the French were strongest, these patriotic efforts met with a signal defeat; for in July, Bessières overthrew the Spanish troops under Blake and Cuesta, at Rios Seco, with such slaughter, that Napoleon declared the victor had placed the crown on Joseph's head: the battle of Jena was scarcely more disastrous to the

Prussians; but in Prussia Bonaparte attacked only an army: here he was opposed by a nation; that hydra, whose powers of resistance increase in proportion to defeat. Thus Léfèbre, though victorious in the field, was repulsed from Saragossa; while in the south, Dupont, having vainly endeavored to reach Cadiz, as vainly sought to retreat across the Sierra Morena: he was surrounded by the Andalusian forces, and obliged to surrender 18,000 men to Castanos, on condition of being sent by sea, as prisoners of war, to France: king Joseph, dispirited and alarmed, immediately abandoned Madrid, and retired with his French troops behind the Ebro. The council of Castile then resumed the government, and a military junta of five generals was formed; but the administration of affairs chiefly rested with the junta of Seville, in which the patriots placed the greatest confidence. Dupont's army was the first large body of French troops that had laid down their arms since the revolution: a national enthusiasm, founded, whether right or wrong, on a sense of the justice of their cause, had hitherto pervaded the French soldiery: but this had now almost evaporated; they began to feel that it was not in the cause of France, but of its ambitious ruler, that they fought; and they descended accordingly toward the level of mercenary troops: the first symptoms of this change appeared in the surrender of Dupont at Baylen; a position, out of which a revolutionary army would have fought its way, reckless of loss. The capitulation was shamefully violated by the savage Spaniards; for their prisoners, instead of being sent to France, were maltreated, and numbers of them murdered in cold blood: eighty officers were massacred in the most cowardly manner at Lebrixa, while they endeavored in vain to defend themselves against assassins who fired on them from the surrounding houses.⁴ Horrible as were the excesses committed by French

⁴ See Napier's Peninsular War, vol. i. p. 122. From the same authority we learn, that colonel René, who was returning to Dupont's army from a mission to Portugal, when discovered to be a Frenchman, was seized by these barbarians; and after undergoing a horrible mutilation, was placed between two planks, and sawed asunder whilst alive!

CHAP.
XLIX.

1808.
Affairs of
Portugal.

troops in Spain, it must be confessed that they were but retaliation.

Meantime the flame of insurrection had spread to Portugal; whose inhabitants rose against Junot, and united with the Spaniards in asserting their independence. Early in the summer, some Spanish gentlemen from the Asturias arrived in London, followed by a succession of deputies or envoys from other parts of the kingdom, to solicit aid from the British government; and on the twenty-second of June, his majesty through Mr. Canning, issued a declaration, promising both naval and military succors, not only to the province of Asturias, but to every other part of the Spanish territory, where the people should appear animated by a proper spirit: several thousands of Spanish prisoners in England were set at liberty clothed, and sent home to join their countrymen; the British arsenals and treasury were thrown open; all that one party could require, or the other supply, was without hesitation, liberally accorded; and the first remittance of £300,000 in dollars, sent a few days after the arrival of the deputies, was accompanied by 5000 muskets, 30,000 pikes, and an immense quantity of powder and balls. From this time the whole resources of Great Britain were freely drawn forth; not, it must be confessed, in the genuine cause of freedom, though in opposition to an unprincipled usurper: in fact, we were now leaguings with monks and Spanish inquisitors, to restore Ferdinand VII. one of the most bigoted and contemptible monarchs that ever disgraced a throne: hence, although national enthusiasm was very generally excited, many enlightened persons desponded, when they saw the nation pledged to a people that fought for the cause of their own debasement: to such philanthropists success itself appeared scarcely desirable for Spain; since the result would only be a continuance of ignorance, superstition, and slavery: ministers however regarded its territory as an arena, on which British armies might be advantageously trained, so as to contend with success against the legions of Bonaparte. The

views of each party corresponded with events: for while the gates of victory were thrown open, in those Pyrenean passes, through which the stream of war burst on the French soil; many a Spanish patriot, during years of fanaticism, treachery, and bloodshed, has had cause to regret the loss of that constitution which Napoleon drew up for the people, whose political regeneration he had in view.

CHAP.
XLIX.
1808.

When the British parliament met on the twenty-first of January, the principal subject that engaged its attention, after the policy and legality of our extended orders in council, was the expedition to Copenhagen; which, though very glorious to the gallant troops and seamen who had achieved its object, was by a large party, both in parliament and the kingdom at large, considered disgraceful to the administration by which it was planned: the reason for undertaking this enterprise was said to be a secret article in the treaty of Tilsit respecting Ireland; which country was represented by the opposition as an object of dread rather than of confidence; while ministers, instead of conciliating her discontented population, preferred an act of unparalleled aggression against a neutral state, which might possibly be compelled to assist the enemy's machinations against this injured and disaffected portion of our empire. The act however was openly defended on the plea of necessity, arising from the powerful combination of European states formed against us after the treaty of Tilsit: 'perhaps,' said viscount Hamilton, the eloquent mover of the address, 'among the various causes which have laid continental states at the feet of France, none have contributed more largely to produce that disastrous effect, than the facility with which those states admitted every violation of the law of nations, of which the enemy wished to avail himself: we alone have avoided becoming victims of the credulity, irresolution, and delay that have overwhelmed all other countries. He trusted that at such a crisis, encompassed as we were by external perils, we should never be cursed with the greatest of all evils, a timid and feeble govern-

Meeting of
parliament.

CHAP.
XLIX.
1808.

ment. High as the spirit, and extensive as the resources of our country were, its dangers would indeed be imminent, were the administration of its affairs placed in the hands of men, who, with eyes open to the enemy's designs, would be content to reply to his acts by arguments, or hesitate to act themselves from the apprehension of responsibility.' Though the address was carried triumphantly, Mr. Ponsonby soon afterward brought forward a motion for the production of papers, previous to ulterior proceedings of an accusatorial nature: so at least the motion was regarded by ministers, who, at this stage of the business, put forth all their powers of defence; in which their great champion, Mr. Canning, bore away the palm from every competitor. Beginning an eloquent and argumentative harangue by observing, 'that ministers were called on, not to account for disaster and disgrace, but to explain the elements, and justify the motives, of an eminent service successfully performed;' he felt sure that no charge of party feelings could rest on those gentlemen by whom this motion was brought forward; as had sometimes happened, when the successors of an administration had been left in possession of a glory which they dilapidated: no envious feelings of comparison could have instigated it; for when nothing had been done by one set of men, it was impossible to compare their actions with what had been done by another. The right honorable gentleman then went into a detail of the conduct of Denmark; showing that it testified neither good intentions toward this country, nor means of resisting the influence of a superior power: in the course of his observations, he adverted to the ready acquiescence of the Danish government, when the French shut up the Elbe and the Weser, while a strong remonstrance was issued against our blockade of those rivers; though this was withdrawn, as soon as it was found that to press objections against the measure would be injurious to their own commerce. Mr. Canning then declared, that even the noble lord who preceded him in administration had notified to the Danish government, that his majesty could never,

in the event of that power submitting to the control of France, suffer either the whole or a part of its navy to be placed at the disposal of Bonaparte; and that if the Danes should permit the French to occupy Holstein, he could not abstain from taking measures to maintain the honor of his crown, and assert the rights of his subjects. He presumed, from the acclamations elicited by this declaration, that the gentlemen opposite inferred, that these measures should not have been resorted to until the Danish navy had been actually taken by France, or an agreement been entered into for its surrender; or at least a communication of such agreement been made by a government, which had entered into a convention with this country in August, and violated that convention in the December following. He then contrasted the measure under discussion with that taken by the preceding administration, in endeavoring to seize on the Turkish fleet; for which no extenuation could be offered: he also entered at large on a review of Bonaparte's acts and bulletins, and their bearings on the question; concluding with an exposition of his views in destroying the trade, and together with it the maritime power of this kingdom, the only remaining obstacle to his universal aggrandisement: 'but,' said the right honorable gentleman, 'though he should direct the whole accumulated force of his vast territories to this purpose, he will find all his projects frustrated, until he can make all nations independent of commerce, in consequence of their own productions; until *omnis feret omnia tellus*.'

Canning's eloquence contributed to give a decided majority to ministers; but having inserted in his speech many garbled extracts from the papers of his predecessors found in the foreign office, he subjected himself to severe censure by lord Howick's friends, especially Mr. Whitbread, for this unfair method of pressing an argument against his opponents: his political delinquences however, especially that of defending what was called Mr. Perceval's intolerance and lord Castlereagh's injustice, regarding the affairs of Ireland, turned against him the severest shafts of satire that

CHAP.
XLIX.
1808.

Peter
Plymley's
Letters.

CHAP.
XLIX.
1808.

ever assailed a minister; and as the principal arguments for catholic emancipation and the amelioration of Ireland are contained in the pages of Peter Plymley, it may serve to relieve the dryness of historical details, if we introduce them under the humorous effusions of that sarcastic writer. After confessing that the foreign secretary is both a respectable and highly agreeable man in private life, he says,—‘you may as well feed me with decayed potatoes, as console me for the miseries of Ireland by the resources of his sense and his discretion. It is only the public situation of this gentleman, that intitles me, or induces me, to say so much about him: he is a fly in amber: nobody cares about the fly; the only question is, how did he get there? nor do I attack him from the love of glory, but from the love of utility; as a burgomaster hunts a rat in a Dutch dike for fear it should flood a province. You tell me I am a party-man: I hope I shall always be so, when I see my country in the hands of a second-rate lawyer, and a pert London joker; a political Killegrew, who, just before the breaking up of the last administration, was in actual treaty with them for a place; and if they had survived twenty-four hours longer, would have been now declaiming against the cry of ‘No popery!’ instead of inflaming it.’ With respect to the injustice of the yoke imposed upon Ireland he thus proceeds:—

‘Depend on it, whole nations have always some reason for their hatred. Before you refer the turbulence of the Irish to incurable defects in their character, tell me if you have treated them as friends and equals? Have you protected their commerce? have you respected their religion? have you been as anxious for their freedom as your own? Nothing of all this. What then? why you have confiscated the territorial surface of the country twice over: you have massacred and exported her inhabitants; depriving four-fifths of all civil privileges: you have, at every period, made her commerce and manufacture slavishly subordinate to your own: and yet the hatred which the Irish bear to you is the result of an original turbulence of cha-

racter, and of a primitive, obdurate wildness, utterly incapable of civilisation! The embroidered inanities, and the sixth-form effusions of Mr. Canning, are really not powerful enough to make me believe this: nor is there any authority on earth (always excepting the dean of Christ-church) which could make it credible to me. I am sick of Mr. Canning: there is not a hap'orth of bread to all his sugar and sack: I love not the cretaceous and incredible countenance of his colleague: the only opinion, on which I agree with these two gentlemen, is that which they entertain of each other. I am sure, that the insolence of Pitt, and the unbalanced accounts of Melville, were far better than the perils of this new ignorance:

CHAP.
XLIX.
1808.

Nonne fuit satius tristes Amaryllidis iras
Atque superba pati fastidia? nonne Menalcan?
Quamvis ille *niger*.

In the midst of the most profound peace, the secret articles of the treaty of Tilsit, in which the destruction of Ireland is resolved on, induce you to rob the Danes of their fleet: after the expedition had sailed, out comes the treaty of Tilsit, containing no article, public or private, alluding to Ireland. The state of the world, you tell me, justified us in doing this: just God! do we think only of the state of the world, when there is an opportunity for robbery, for murder, and for plunder; and do we forget the state of the world, when we are called on to be wise, and good, and just? Does the state of the world never remind us that we have four millions of subjects, whose injuries we ought to atone for, and whose affections we ought to conciliate? Does the state of the world never warn us to lay aside infernal bigotry, and to arm every man who acknowledges a God, and can grasp his sword? Did it never occur to this administration, that they might virtuously get hold of a force ten times greater than the force of the Danish fleet? was there no other way of protecting Ireland, but by bringing eternal shame on Great Britain,

CHAP.
XLIX.

1808.

and by making the earth a den of robbers? See what the men whom you have supplanted would have done: they would have rendered the invasion of Ireland impossible, by restoring to the catholics their long-lost rights; they would have acted in such a manner, that the French would neither have wished for invasion, nor dared to attempt it; they would have increased the permanent strength of the country, while they preserved its reputation unsullied: nothing of this kind your friends have done, because they are solemnly pledged to do nothing of this kind; because to tolerate all religions, and to equalise civil rights to all sects, is to oppose some of the worst passions of our nature; to plunder and to oppress, is to gratify them all: they wanted the huzzas of mobs, and they have for ever blasted the fame of England to obtain them. Were the fleets of Holland, France, and Spain destroyed by larceny? you resisted the power of 150 sail of the line by sheer courage, but violated every principle of morals from the dread of fifteen hulks; while the expedition itself cost you three times more than the value of the larcenous matter brought away. The French trample on the laws of God and man, not for old cordage, but for kingdoms; and they always take care to be well paid for their crimes: we contrive, under our present administration, to unite moral with intellectual deficiency; to grow weaker and worse by the same action. If they had any evidence of the intended hostility of the Danes, why was it not produced? why have the nations of Europe been allowed to feel an indignation against this country, beyond the reach of all subsequent information? Are these times, do you imagine, when we can trifle with a year of universal hatred, dally with the curses of Europe, and then regain a lost character at pleasure, by the parliamentary perspirations of the foreign secretary, or the solemn asseverations of the pecuniary Rose? Believe me, it is not under such ministers as these, that the dexterity of honest Englishmen will ever equal that of French knaves: it is not in their

presence that the serpent of Moses will ever swallow up the serpents of the magicians.

CHAP.
XLIX.
1808.

‘Lord Hawkesbury says that nothing is to be granted to the catholics from fear. What! not even justice? why not? there are 4,000,000 of disaffected people within twenty miles of our own coast. I fairly confess, that the dread which I have of their physical power is with me a very strong motive for listening to their claims: to talk of not acting from fear is mere parliamentary cant: from what motive but fear, I should be glad to know, have all the improvements in our constitution proceeded? I question if any justice has ever been done to large masses of mankind from any other: by what other motives can the plunderers of the Baltic suppose nations to be governed in their intercourse with each other? If I say, give this people what they ask because it is just, do you think I should get ten people to listen to me? would not the lesser of the two Jenkinsons be the first to treat me with contempt? The only true way to make the mass of mankind see the beauty of justice, is by showing to them plainly the consequences of injustice: if a body of French troops land in Ireland, the whole population of that country will rise against you to a man, and you cannot possibly survive such an event three years: such, from the bottom of my soul, do I believe to be the present state of that country; and so far does it appear to me from being impolitic and unstatesman-like to concede any thing to such a danger; that if the catholics, in addition to their present just demands, were to petition for the perpetual removal of the said lord Hawkesbury from his majesty’s councils, I think, whatever might be its effect on the destinies of Europe, and however it might retard our own individual destruction, that the prayer of the petition should be instantly complied with: Canning’s crocodile tears should not move me; the hoops of the maids of honor should not hide him; I would tear him from the banisters of the back stairs, and plunge him in the fishy furnes of the dirtiest of all his cinque ports.’

Whatever may be thought of the severity or malice

CHAP.
XLIX.
1808.

of these invectives, Mr. Canning had no reason to complain; since his own tirades against the preceding administration were equally distinguished by those ingredients: indeed, the author of Peter Plymley's Letters justifies himself on this very ground; when, discharging an arrow at the foreign secretary, through his *near and dear relations*, he complains that 'hitherto every body seems to have spared a man who never spares any body.'

Debates in
parliament.

When the catholic petition was discussed, on the twenty-fifth of May, Mr. Canning manifested an ardent desire to elude the question, and, if possible, to let it pass off without a debate; for though a member of the present cabinet, it was well known he did not coincide on that important point with his colleagues, who had openly avowed their sentiments at this juncture, by admitting Dr. Duigenan to a seat at the privy council. While some persons extolled this appointment as a fearless indication of ministerial opinion, it was viewed by many moderate men of both parties as a wanton insult on the feelings and prejudices of the Irish people; and in the disgrace attending it, Canning was doomed to participate. In the discussion which ensued, Tierney asked;—'How ministers could suppose, that in recommending such an appointment, they were cherishing that unity and harmony, which it appeared to be his majesty's earnest desire to cultivate? He wished to hear some of them state those merits of the learned doctor, for which he had been so recommended: that sort of defence made by the right honorable secretary for Ireland was any thing but complimentary to his friend;—that his power of doing mischief would be very limited; and that he would only be called on for his advice on ecclesiastical questions. A noble lord and a right honorable gentleman were placed this night in a situation of peculiar embarrassment: it was the boast of that right honorable gentleman, to be the representative of Mr. Pitt's opinions; but he would venture to say, that if Mr. Pitt were living, he would be ashamed of such an appointment; and that he never would have

lent himself to that contemptible system of irritation, which the present administration seemed to have adopted.'

CHAP.
XLIX.
1808.

Sir Francis Burdett, considering that the proceeds from the droits of admiralty amounted to so large a sum as to become dangerous to public liberty, felt a conviction that parliament never could endure that it should be left at the private disposal of the king: he accordingly moved, with a view to ulterior inquiry, that an account of the net proceeds, paid out of the court of admiralty to the receiver-general of droits, since the first of January, 1793, with the balances now remaining, be laid before the house; which motion was agreed to.

When the mutiny bill came under consideration, lord Castlereagh, in reference to Mr. Wyndham's system, declared, that he did not object to limited service with certain modifications: he only thought it should not be enforced to the exclusion of unlimited service; and therefore moved, that a clause be inserted in the bill, allowing an option of enlistment for life; which passed by a very considerable majority.

Another measure, relating to internal defence, was the creation of a local militia, amounting to 60,000 men, to be balloted for, in proportion to the deficiency of volunteers in each county, from among persons between the ages of eighteen and twenty-five. Volunteer corps were permitted, with his majesty's approbation, to transfer themselves to this militia; the period of service to be twenty-eight days in the year; for which time pay was to be allowed.

The chancellor of the exchequer did not add much his year to our public burdens. By an arrangement with the Bank, a sum of £500,000 from unclaimed lividends was obtained for immediate use; an equitable reduction in the charges made for superintending the pecuniary concerns of the public was effected to the amount of £64,000; and a loan of £3,000,000 was advanced by the directors, without interest, until six months after the termination of the war. The supplies amounted to about £43,000,000 for England,

CHAP.
XLIX.

1808.

and £5,700,000 for Ireland; while the ways and means included a loan of £8,000,000; to provide for the interest of which, fresh taxes were only found necessary to the amount of £325,000. A new plan was introduced by the chancellor of the exchequer, to accelerate the reduction of our national debt; by which proprietors of three per cent., consolidated or reduced Bank annuities might exchange them with the commissioners for reduction of the debt, into an annuity for one or two lives: the power of transfer however was limited to persons above thirty-five years of age, and the amount to sums not less than £100; the stock not to be transferable when the funds were above £80: the effect of this would be to secure to the country a redemption of the sums thus transferred, at the price current when the transfer was made. A bill for preventing the grant of offices in reversion, or for joint lives with benefit of survivorship, was brought in by Mr. Bankes, and carried through the commons; but in the lords, though supported by several members of administration, it was steadily opposed by lord chancellor Eldon, lords Arden and Redesdale, as well as by the duke of Montrose, and thrown out by a large majority: conceiving however that it was incumbent on the house of commons not to abandon a measure so intimately connected with retrenchment, Mr. Bankes brought forward another bill, similar in its object, but limited as to duration; and being thus modified, it passed the upper house.

Sir Samuel Romilly, who, as well as many other enlightened men, had long lamented, that in our legal code so many crimes were made subject to the punishment of death, introduced a bill to repeal so much of an act of Elizabeth, as related to the taking away benefit of clergy from offenders convicted of stealing privately from the person. A clause was inserted by the solicitor-general, providing that the act of privately stealing, as distinguished from robbery, should be punished by transportation for life, or for a term of years, at the discretion of the judge; who might also commute the punishment into imprisonment for any

period not exceeding three years. A bill also passed, which was framed by the lord chancellor, for better administration of justice in Scotland: its object was to divide the court of session into two chambers of seven or eight judges; to give those courts certain powers for making regulations with respect to proceedings, and to executions in pending appeals; and also for issuing commissions to ascertain cases in which it might be proper to establish a trial by jury. An act for prohibiting the distillation of spirits from grain, for a limited time, was strongly opposed, as tending to check that demand which encouraged agriculturists to grow more than was necessary for the ordinary support of the people, and thus ensured a supply in seasons of scarcity: it was defended as a temporary measure, on the ground that the supply of grain from the continent was cut off, and no prospect left of a sufficient resource in our last year's crop.

CHAP.
XLIX.
1806.

The grand movement in Spain, pregnant with consequences so important to the rest of Europe, though it left the peninsula itself as enslaved as ever, awakened the zeal and animated the enthusiasm of the British nation to such a degree, that Mr. Sheridan seemed to proclaim only the public sentiment, when he rose, on the fifteenth of June, to call the attention of our legislature to this subject, and to demand its utmost exertions in favor of the Spanish cause: had his political associates learned by this example to sacrifice party feelings, and place themselves in advance of the great events now ready to burst on the world, they would probably not have had to complain of so long and total an exclusion from the affairs of government. Mr. Canning, after complimenting Mr. Sheridan on his patriotic address, declared that it called for such a disclosure of ministerial sentiments as might be made without the hazard of a dishonorable compromise, and without exciting expectations which might never be realised: accordingly, he assured the house, that his majesty's ministers saw with a deep and lively interest the noble struggle which a part of the Spanish nation was making to resist the unexampled atrocity of

CHAP.
XLIX.
1808.

France, and to preserve the independence of their country: there existed the strongest disposition on the part of our government to afford every practicable aid in a contest so magnanimous; but he could not be expected to say, whether they thought the crisis arrived, or whether they anticipated its speedy approach, when the opinions now declared should be called into action. On the fourth of July parliament was prorogued; and the commissioners stated in his majesty's name, that he would continue to make every exertion in his power for supporting the Spanish cause.

State of the
continent.

At the commencement of this year, Austria had declared against her old ally; alleging, as a reason, the refusal of our government to accept the emperor's mediation for peace with France; but the real cause of this apparent hostility lay in the predominating influence of Bonaparte, which had now extended itself over almost every part of the continent. It was not very creditable to the Russian autocrat, that he endeavored to console himself for that humiliating connexion which necessity had cemented, by pursuing the system of rapine which distinguished his imperial ally: in February, a Russian army entered Finland, which province had always been an object of cupidity to the cabinet of St. Petersburg; while the accession of Frederic VI. to the crown of Denmark was also followed by a declaration of war against Sweden; whose monarch, though possessed of some heroic qualities, wanted that soundness of judgment which was necessary for the right management of public affairs. Already involved in a war with France and Russia, he prepared to meet the combination of dangers with which he was threatened; and as his resources were very inadequate to such a contest, the British government granted him a subsidy of £100,000 a month; and also sent 10,000 troops, under the command of sir John Moore, to render assistance as circumstances might demand: a disagreement however between this impetuous monarch and the British general respecting military plans, prevented all co-operation; and after

several bloody battles, the fate of Gustavus Adolphus appeared inevitable; when, to avoid falling under the yoke of Russia, he entered into a convention, which virtually left the granary of Sweden in the hands of his conqueror: this occupation of Finland was the more disgraceful to Alexander, as the jealousy of Napoleon was allayed by the czar's provisional consent to his invasion of Spain, and an acknowledgement of his brother Joseph as king of that country.

Bonaparte this year effected considerable changes in the affairs of Italy: having adopted Eugene Beauharnois as his son, and settled on him the Italian kingdom in tail male, he now incorporated with it the legations of Ancona, Urbino, Macerata, and Camerino; since the pope refused to obey his commands, in adopting the continental system, and making war against England. French troops, under general Miollis, were soon ordered to occupy Rome itself; and this aggression was the commencement of prolonged struggles, during which Pius VII. fully expiated the condescension he had shown at the coronation of Napoleon: Parma, Piacenza, and Guastalla were also annexed to the kingdom of Italy, as were Kehl, Wesel, Cassel, and Flushing to France; while a similar fate evidently hung over the Hans Towns. To complete his domestic policy, he now instituted an hereditary nobility; and the Moniteur exhibited a long list of princes, dukes, counts, barons, and knights of the empire: at the same time, he determined to raise up the fallen edifice of the university; but being the sworn enemy of liberty, he discarded that comprehensive system of education, which gives the utmost degree of development to the human faculties; and instituted a school capable of training up useful agents of imperial despotism, rather than men of enlightened minds.

The time had not yet arrived when Napoleon, ^{Naval} abandoning all hopes of assistance from his navy, ^{affairs.} secured the fleets of France within her harbors: he had now collected a large squadron at Toulon, to co-operate with his troops on the side of Calabria, in an

CHAP.
XLIX.

1808.

attack on Sicily: possessed of that island, he would have been able effectually to injure our commerce, and destroy our influence in the Mediterranean; accordingly very powerful means were prepared for depriving us of so important a station. To counteract his views, measures were taken to fortify the Sicilian coast opposite to Calabria, where a landing could be effected; while lord Collingwood blockaded the port of Toulon as closely as was consistent with his efforts to afford that energetic assistance to the Spanish patriots, which the critical state of their affairs required. A considerable French fleet, stationed at Cadiz, and unable to escape by putting to sea, surrendered in June to that people who had experienced so many insults and injuries from its flag: as yet, however, a want of confidence in our government, and an overweening trust in their own unassisted struggles, pervaded the Spanish nation; and when lord Collingwood wished those men of war that lay in harbor to join his squadron for the purpose of intercepting any French fleet that might be sent against the Spanish dominions in South America; the supreme junta of Seville, instead of complying with his request, began even to dismantle their ships.⁵ It was fortunate both for Great Britain and Spain, that a commanding officer of such temper and experience, such honor and political sagacity, as lord Collingwood, happened to be on that station: from the battle of Trafalgar to his lamented death, our whole diplomacy with the Mediterranean states, as well as the supreme command by sea, appears to have been under his direction and guidance: and whoever considers the magnitude and importance of the transactions in which he was concerned, the character of the various governments, the craft and subtlety of

⁵ 'It is arms and money that they want,' said lord Collingwood: 'indeed they appear to be very averse from employing the troops which are here under general Spencer; and I feel convinced that they will not admit them into any garrison town of strength.' 'It is highly important, in all communications with the Spaniards, that there should not appear any object, on the part of Great Britain, distinct from, much less disadvantageous to, the views and interests of the Spanish nation. No object can be so important to this country as the vigorous and persevering efforts of Spain, and their intire confidence in the zealous and disinterested aid of Great Britain.'—*Life of Lord Collingwood*, vol. ii. pp. 170, 171.

their agents, and the obstacles arising from a variety of clashing interests and a difference in religious creeds, will confess that his was no easy task: nothing however in the whole course of the war contributed to exalt this country more in the eyes of other nations, than the manner in which that task was executed; nor is there a name in all her annals, of which England has more reason to be proud, than that of Collingwood.

CHAP.
XLIX.
— 1808. —

As Great Britain was now about to assume a different position in the great contest of nations, by sending armies to the field as well as subsidies to cabinets, and by making a display of national resources, to which the whole history of the world does not afford a parallel, we will briefly advert to the internal state of our country since we last took a view of those changes that had been brought about in the condition of its people.

Statistical
summary.

Ever since the short-lived peace of Amiens, England had pursued, with increased vigor and more extraordinary results, the same means of counteracting Bonaparte's schemes of aggrandisement, as she had adopted before that period. To what extent the system of borrowing and taxing was carried, may be seen in the income and expenditure of the present year, as compared with that of 1793: according to Marshall's tables, the income now arising from taxation was £60,751,973, and the government expenditure was £70,645,219, the sum borrowed amounting to £9,893,246; while the corresponding sums for 1793 were, income £36,847,882, expenditure £45,823,783, loans £8,975,901. The principal source whence the present enormous supplies were raised lay in paper-money; which, through notes of the Bank of England and country banks, as well as commercial and government bills, now circulated in so large a quantity, as to depreciate the currency, and violate existing contracts; to the great advantage of the payers: in the mean time, manufactures and commerce, notwithstanding all Napoleon's efforts to enforce his continental system, were extending themselves pro-

CHAP.
XLIX.

1808.

digiously, but without improving the condition of the lower orders: hence it was manifest to an observant eye, that our prosperity was fictitious, and that a time must come when reaction would take place: this appeared still more evident to those who contemplated the state of agricultural laborers, and compared it with that of their employers: as their money wages did not rise in proportion to the money prices of produce, the farmer had in this a large source of gain: he became a thriving man; his credit increased; and, since the paper system was highly favorable to the establishment of country banks, he was readily supplied with their notes: thus he was enabled occasionally to keep back his produce and raise prices, as well as to augment his capital and obtain a greater profit from his land: in the mean time, the impoverishment of his laborers, subject as their condition is to much less counteraction than that of other classes, became apparent in the assessments made for their relief: the average annual amount of these, from the year 1804 to 1808 inclusive, being about £6,500,000; nearly thrice the sum required in 1793.

The extended use of improved machinery in some branches of manufacture enabled British merchants to undersell those of all other countries, and yet to realise large profits: the manufacturer therefore aimed at extending his business, and paid high wages, until the influx of numbers into the profitable districts brought them down; so that about this time, the manufacturing laborers began to partake of the general depression, and serious disturbances took place in Manchester and its neighboring districts. That this reduction of wages did not result from any decline of foreign commerce, is evident from the tables; which show, that in 1793 the official value of produce, exported, beyond colonial produce re-exported, was £14,605,753, and in the present year £26,691,063: yet loans, taxes, and consequent high profits, were sufficient to bring down wages to a great extent: the annual abstraction of fifty to seventy millions of capital from productive use, or from trade, necessarily in-

creased the general rate of profit, as was shown by the state of the public funds; the price of three per cent. consols, at the end of February, 1803, being 71½, and at the same period this year 63½.

CHAP.
XLIX.
1808.

The number of enclosure bills in 1808 was ninety-two; and the cultivation of land was found so profitable, that every agriculturist was anxious to increase his occupation; whence farms became larger, and improvement in husbandry ensued: proprietors of land took advantage of the general competition for it; so that rents were raised to an extent that more than compensated for taxes, and every other burden produced by the war. To counteract what was abstracted from the wages of labor, there was but an increase in the productive power of the people, added to the depreciation of our currency; the former enabling the laboring classes to bring more wealth into existence, while the latter caused less of it to be taken, especially by the owners of annuities: still these combined forces were not so powerful as that which acted in a contrary direction; wages therefore declined, and with them the condition of the working classes: and this showed which party suffered by the war.

No people could have been better prepared to enter heart and soul into the contest against Bonaparte than the Portuguese; for never had such a system of massacre, confiscation, plunder, and violation of all rights religious and social, been carried on, as that which distinguished the brief period of French usurpation. The base designs of Napoleon on Spain were well known to Junot; who, perceiving the deep interest that was felt in the transactions of Aranjuez and Madrid, not only by the Spanish soldiers leagued with the French in Portugal, but by the Portuguese themselves, lost no time in taking all possible precautions against the effects of their agitation: as soon, however, as tidings of the patriotic war in Spain became known, the troops of that nation separated themselves from their perfidious allies; and, collecting in bodies, began to march toward their injured country: in the Alentejo, 600 of them had an engagement with

Affairs of
Portugal.

CHAP.
XLIX.

1808.

about an equal French force, which they repulsed with great gallantry; and at Oporto, they marched off, with the French commander as their prisoner: but 5000, who remained in Lisbon and the adjoining country, were disarmed and placed in confinement. As intelligence of insurrections now arrived from every quarter, Junot began to prepare for the defence of Lisbon; fortifying the castle, and laying in stores of all kinds: the inhabitants were disarmed, and placed under severe restrictions; every artifice being contrived to give the French a pretext for sacking the town: one detachment was sent to reduce insurgents in the north; another was despatched on the same service to the south; while preparations were made for an encampment on the Campo d'Ourique; from which spot, as well as from the castle, the city was commanded. Junot's celebrated proclamation had already been issued:—'Portuguese,' it said, 'what delirium is this! into what an abyss of evils are you about to plunge! after seven months of perfect tranquillity and harmony, what reason can you have for taking up arms? and against whom?—against an army which is to secure your independence, and maintain the integrity of your country—a numerous, brave, and veteran army, before which you would be scattered, as the sands of the desert before the fierce winds of the south!' After cautioning them to beware of English heretics, who sought equally to debase their country and destroy their religion, he declared, that the emperor had, at his solicitation, graciously remitted half the contribution imposed on them, and that he was on the point of accomplishing all their wishes; that this was the moment to implore his clemency, and propitiate his offended majesty; for his armies were already on their frontiers; and every person taken in arms would instantly be shot; every town or city rising against the French would be delivered up to destruction, and its inhabitants to the sword.

Yet notwithstanding these threats and this boasting, Junot was well aware of the storm gathering around him. Spain was in arms; the French squadron

at Cadiz had surrendered; the governor of Gibraltar and the British admiral were co-operating with a people, whom it had long been painful to consider as enemies: the Portuguese had caught the spirit of their neighbors; the British flag, always victorious on the ocean, was in sight from Lisbon; nor could there be a doubt but that England would seize the first favorable opportunity of sending aid to her most ancient and faithful ally.

CHAP.
XLIX.
1808.

Junot's measures were taken with that promptitude and energy which the occasion required: he hoped to crush the insurgents before any English force could arrive; and wherever they ventured to oppose the regular French troops, the event was as he had foretold. While Kellerman and Avril were ravaging the Alentejo, the cruel and rapacious Loison was laying waste the north of Portugal; and the French soldiers made full use of the license allowed them by their commanders; returning to Lisbon loaded with spoils, and with the execrations of the people. 'Beja has revolted,' said Kellerman, in one of his proclamations; 'Beja no longer exists: its guilty inhabitants have been cut off with the edge of the sword, and its houses delivered up to pillage and the flames:' the last provincial city which suffered before any hope of retribution appeared, was Evora, against which Loison carried a powerful detachment. General Leite had collected here the great mass of insurgents; and, being assisted by three or four thousand Spaniards, took a position to cover the town: when Loison came up, he directed Margaron and Solignac to turn their flanks, while he attacked their centre: the Spaniards performed no service, and the Portuguese soon took to flight, and were cut down by cavalry: a part, entering the town, made an effort of despair to arrest the enemy's progress; but the concluding scene gave to this unhappy country a foretaste of the misery which it was about to drain, even to the dregs: Evora was given up to immediate pillage; nine hundred persons of different ages and sexes were put to the sword in its streets and churches; thirty-eight of the

CHAP.
XLIX.

1808.

clergy, with the bishop of Maranham, were murdered; and the nunneries being forced open, their unfortunate inmates were sacrificed to French cruelty and lust.

But the period of retribution was at hand, when the ruthless invaders were to be driven with ignominy from their plunder, and to suffer some of those evils which they had inflicted on their victims: an armament had been prepared in England for the purpose of attacking the Spanish settlements in South America, when news arrived from old Spain which instantly converted enemies into friends and allies: this force, consisting of 10,000 men, sailed from Cork on the twelfth of July, under sir Arthur Wellesley; and arrived at Corunna, only a few days after the fatal battle had taken place at Rio Seco, which opened the road for king Joseph to Madrid: the British commander immediately offered the assistance of his force to the junta of Galicia; but though the Spaniards were flying in all directions, they were as yet uninstructed by misfortunes, and at the same time full of pride, and averse to heretical interference: their reply therefore was, that they wished for nothing from the British government except money, arms, and ammunition: but the liberation of Lisbon was pointed out as an object worthy of British valor; and to Portugal the great deliverer of the peninsula proceeded. The French forces were concentrated in the south, and Junot had rendered the capital almost impregnable; but in the north the authority of the prince regent had been re-established; juntas, like those in Spain, were formed; and Oporto was free from the presence of its invaders: these circumstances determined sir Arthur to proceed to that city; since he had received no definite instructions from our government beyond a recommendation to co-operate with Portugal and Spain in their efforts to throw off the French yoke, and certain rules for the direction of his political conduct. The bishop of Oporto, who was at the head of its junta, had already claimed assistance from England: 'we hope,' said that prelate, 'for an aid of 300,000 *cruzados nuevos*; of arms and accoutrements complete;

and of cloth for 40,000 infantry and 8000 cavalry; 3000 barrels of gunpowder; some cargoes of salt fish and other provisions; with 6000 auxiliary troops at least, including some cavalry: yet at this period an army of 5000 organised men could not have been put in motion against the French; nor had any rational plan of operations been thought of: 'the times, however,' as colonel Napier observes, 'were favorable for extravagant demands; and his were not rejected by our ministers, who sent agents to Oporto and other parts, with power to grant supplies. The improvident system adopted for Spain, being thus extended to Portugal, produced precisely the same effects; that is, cavils, intrigues, waste, insubordination, inordinate vanity, and ambition among the ignorant, upstart men of the day.'⁶

CHAP.
XLIX.
1808.

When sir Arthur Wellesley arrived at Oporto, he did not feel inclined to join the large army which the bishop, assisted by civil and military authorities, had drawn out for his inspection on paper; nor otherwise to engage in plans laid down by episcopal authority: having therefore given his advice that these paper troops should be employed in defending Tras os Montes against the advance of Bessières, he determined, after consultation with admiral sir Charles Cotton, to land at the mouth of the Mondego, at such a distance from Lisbon as would ensure the unmolested disembarkation of his men: at the same time he sent orders to general Spencer, who had been long wandering like a knight errant, seeking adventures in Andalusia, to set sail, and join him with the forces under his command: thus he put an end, by that decision which generally accompanies great talents, to the double line of operations laid down by lord Castlereagh, in defiance of all true military principles.⁷ Various other obstacles, however, were yet to be overcome, which the British cabinet, going beyond even the Aulic council in absurdity, raised up to try his patience, while they proved his fitness for command. Off the Mondego he

Arrival of
sir Arthur
Wellesley.

⁶ See Peninsular War, vol. i. p. 173.

⁷ Ibid. vol. i. p. 184.

CHAP.
XLIX.

1808.

received despatches, which announced, not only the sailing of sir John Moore's troops, but the appointment of sir Hew Dalrymple, lieutenant governor of Gibraltar, to the chief command of all the British forces sent to Portugal: but this mortifying intelligence did not relax his activity; for having heard of Dupont's capitulation, he determined to disembark, without waiting for general Spencer's arrival; though, by singular good fortune, that officer joined him at this moment, without having received his orders: with equal promptitude and sagacity he had set sail for the Tagus when Dupont surrendered, and was directed by the admiral to Mondego-bay.

The army, when landed, amounted only to 12,300 men; for a part of Spencer's force was kept on board the transports to be reconveyed to Gibraltar: our commander immediately held a conference with Don Bernadim Freire, the Portuguese generalissimo, who proposed that the troops of both nations should relinquish all communication with the coast; and, throwing themselves into the heart of Beira, commence an offensive campaign; in furtherance of which plan he promised ample stores of provisions: sir Arthur, however, had already discovered the weakness of the insurrection, as well as the character of Freire, whom he supplied with 5000 stand of arms and ammunition; but resolved to rely on his own resources: as he had a great disadvantage in the want of cavalry, and the inexperience of his commissariat staff, he prudently determined not to depart far from the sea-coast; to keep his troops together; and to strike a blow as near to Lisbon as possible.

In the mean time, the French commander in that capital began to feel considerable embarrassment: his principal force was at a distance; the patriots in the south, assisted by the Spaniards, were beginning to rise; the strength of the northern insurgents was greatly exaggerated by reports; the inhabitants of Lisbon were hostile in the highest degree against their oppressors; and a British army, under a commander already known to fame, was advancing along the

coast, with the advantage of a powerful navy either for supplies or retreat. At this time Loison was in the neighborhood of Estremos and Villa Viciosa, with about 8000 men; 2500 were in the fortress of Elvas and Almeida; a small corps was in Abrantes; 1000 were in Santarem, and the same number in Peniche; a brigade was at Alcobaça; and the remainder were in and about Lisbon; the Tagus being strongly guarded, and communication between its north and south banks kept up by refitted Portuguese ships, a Russian squadron, and innumerable boats.⁸

In the beginning of August, Junot ordered Loison to advance by Portalegre and Abrantes, for the purpose of forming a junction at or near Leiria, with general Laborde: who quitted Lisbon on the sixth with 3000 infantry, about 600 cavalry, and five pieces of artillery; proceeding by way of Villa Franca, Rio Mayor, and Candeiros, to observe the movements of the British. Junot himself remained at present in the capital, to repress insurrectionary movements; but being disquieted by a rising of the patriots above Alcacer do Sal and Setuval, he despatched Kellerman to disperse them; ordering him to withdraw its garrison from the latter place, and abandon all other French posts south of the Tagus, except Palmella: Kellerman however had scarcely departed, when a small British force, arriving off the bar, excited turbulence among the inhabitants; and in this state of perplexity and irresolution Junot lingered till the fifteenth, when the progress of the British army forced him to take the field in person. In the peculiar state of affairs at Lisbon, he thought proper to leave 7000 men under general Travot; so that he carried with him only a reserve of 2000 infantry and 600 cavalry, with ten pieces of artillery: his march was delayed by several untoward circumstances; during which time Sir Arthur had cut the line of communication between Loison and Laborde, and was severely pressing the latter, whom he brought to action on the seventeenth at Rorica: after a severe contest, he drove him from

⁸ See Napier, vol. i. p. 189.

CHAP.
XLIX.

1808.

that strong position, with a loss of 600 killed or wounded to the vanquished, and nearly as many to the victors; but the latter had now the road to Torres Vedras open before them. As our general received intelligence that Loison's division was at Bombarral, only five miles distant, he took a position for the night near the field of battle; and thinking that Loison and Laborde had effected a junction, resolved to march next morning on Torres Vedras: but before night-fall, he learned that reinforcements under generals Anstruther and Acland, with a large fleet of store-ships, were off the coast: he therefore changed his plans, and advanced on Vimiero, a village near the sea, in order to protect their embarkation. In the mean time, Junot, on the eighteenth, quitted Cercal, where he had effected a junction with Loison's corps, and in the evening of the same day gained the heights of Torres Vedras: on the nineteenth, he was joined by Laborde, and next day by his corps of reserve; when he prepared for a decisive action: his troops consisted of about 14,000 men, while sir Arthur's army was now increased to 16,000, exclusive of colonel Trant's Portuguese brigade: also two British regiments under general Beresford were with the fleet at the mouth of the Tagus. In such a state of affairs, the British commander designed to strike the first blow; and by following it up, to prevent the enemy from rallying, and renewing the campaign: in this view, he had previously written to sir Harry Burrard, giving a statement of his own proceedings and intentions; recommending also, that when sir John Moore arrived with his division, he should disembark at the Mondego, and march instantly to Santarem; by which movement he would protect the left of the army, block the line of the Tagus, and threaten the French communication between Lisbon and Elvas; while 3000 Portuguese under the marquis Valladeres at Guarda, and 5000 under Freire at Leiria, might be induced to co-operate with him. Junot's position at Torres Vedras, about nine miles from Vimiero, was known to be very strong, and difficult of approach, on account of a long

defile, through which an advancing army must pass to reach the summit: but there was a road along the sea-coast, which opened a way to Mafra in its rear: taking advantage of this, sir A. Wellesley, who had very exact surveys of the country, intended, by a forced march on the twenty-first, to turn the position of Torres Vedras; when, occupying Mafra by a strong advanced guard, while the main body seized some advantageous heights at no great distance from that town, he would intercept the French line of march to Montechique: preparations therefore were made for these important movements, which would probably have finished the Portuguese campaign; 'but at this critical period,' says colonel Napier, 'the ministerial arrangements, which provided three commanders-in-chief, began to work: sir H. Burrard arrived in a frigate off the bay of Maceira; when sir Arthur was checked in the midst of his operations, and on the eve of a decisive battle: having repaired on board the vessel, he made his report of the situation of affairs, and renewed his former recommendations respecting the disposal of sir John Moore's troops; but Burrard, who had previously resolved to bring the latter down to Maceira, condemned this project, and forbade any offensive movement until the whole army should be concentrated; upon which sir Arthur returned to his camp.'

The British forces were disposed on some heights formed like an irregular triangle, the apex of which, being a hill in front of the village, was well covered with troops: our right abutted on the sea; and on the left, our piquets alone appeared visible to an enemy, the division stationed behind them being hidden by the nature of the country. Junot determined with great spirit to assail his adversary in this position; and quitted Torres Vedras on the evening of the twentieth, intending to commence operations at day-break: but the difficulties of the ground delayed his march, and fatigued the troops; so that he could not begin his attack before ten o'clock: the method of it was as follows: Laborde led one brigade against the

Battle of
Vimiero.

CHAP.
XLIX.

1808.

British centre; while Bremier headed another against the left, followed by Loison's at a short interval: Kellerman, with a reserve of grenadiers, moved behind Loison; and the cavalry under Margaron, about 1300 in number, was divided; part being on Brennier's right, and part behind the reserve: thirty-three pieces of artillery, distributed among the columns, opened their fire wherever the ground was favorable to their operations.

The attacks on our centre and left were intended to be simultaneous; but Brennier came unexpectedly on a deep ravine, by which the left was defended; and his troops became entangled in the intricacies of the ground: thus Laborde was engaged alone with the divisions under generals Fane and Anstruther; being exposed, in his advance, not only to a tremendous fire of their artillery, but to the guns of the eighth brigade, which halted as it was in the act of mounting the heights toward the left. After this failure in his first combinations, Junot ordered Loison to support Laborde's attack with one of his brigades; while general Solignac, with the other, turned the ravine in which Brennier was entangled, in order to fall on our extreme left. Fane, seeing this, ordered up the reserve artillery under colonel Robe, which formed a powerful battery, and dreadfully shattered the enemy's masses, as they advanced in column; a dangerous mode of advance against troops like the British, drawn out in line; though irresistible against forces of inferior courage and discipline: the French, however, gallantly rushed forward, headed by Laborde in person, and arrived at the summit of our position, panting from their exertions: before they had time to recover their breath, the fiftieth regiment poured a close discharge of musketry into their ranks; and then charging them in front and flank, intirely overthrew them. After a minor attack had been repulsed by another part of Fane's brigade, and the forty-third regiment had gallantly driven back, though with severe loss to itself, that portion of the reserve which Kellerman sent to protect the retreat, the French were so discomfited in the centre, that they

deserted seven guns, retired in a direction parallel to the British line, and left the road to Torres Vedras open to their opponents: no advantage however could now be taken of this circumstance; since a large body of grenadiers were thrown into a pine wood, flanking the line of retreat; and Margaron's well-appointed cavalry was almost uninjured.

CHAP.
XLIX.

1808.

In the mean time, while Brennier's brigade was still hampered in the ravine, Solignac passed along the crest of a ridge above it, and came on general Ferguson's brigade, which was posted at the left of our position: but, where the French expected to find a weak line, they encountered a deep front of battle, protected on each side by steep declivities: a powerful artillery swept off their foremost ranks: and on their right, the British fifth brigade and Portuguese auxiliaries were seen advancing over a distant ridge: Ferguson instantly bore down on the enemy, who fell back with great loss; their cavalry charged his impetuous line without effect; Solignac was carried from the field severely wounded; and six guns were captured. Though Brennier, who at length had cleared the ravine, came up, and retook the artillery, his success was only momentary; for the British troops rallied, returned with a shout to the charge, recovered the guns, and took the general himself prisoner. Ferguson, having thus separated the opposing brigades, would have forced the greater part of Solignac's division to surrender, had not an unexpected order obliged him to halt! the discomfited French then reformed under protection of their cavalry, and joined the broken brigades that were retiring from the attack on the centre. An act of great barbarity stained the character of the French army during this engagement: in their first advance against Ferguson's brigade, they passed heedlessly over our wounded and disarmed soldiers; but when repulsed and beaten back over the same ground, they were observed to stab and wound their fallen and unresisting foes. When Brennier was wounded and captured by our troops, he expressed apprehension of personal violence; on which corporal Mackay of the

CHAP.
XLIX.

1808.

seventy-first stepped forward and took him under his safeguard: the general penetrated with gratitude, immediately offered his watch and purse to his protector; but was astonished at finding them steadily refused.⁹

It was now noon, and the battle was won: thirteen guns, with several hundreds of prisoners, remained in our hands; and more than 2000 had fallen, dead or wounded, in the enemy's ranks: a large portion of our army was yet untouched: the first brigade, which had not fired a shot, was nearer by two miles than any part of the French line to Torres Vedras; and thither Wellesley determined to push forward the brigades of Hill, Anstruther, and Fane; which, seizing on the defiles, might advance to Montechique, and thus cut off Junot's retreat to Lisbon. At that decisive moment, sir H. Burrard, who was present during the action, but had hitherto had the delicacy to abstain from interfering with sir Arthur's movements, thought proper to assume the chief command: his order had arrested general Ferguson's troops in their victorious career; and he now stopped the ulterior operations of the British army, resolving to wait in the position of Vimiero for the arrival of sir John Moore. No representations could move him: with the caution natural to age he was reluctant to hazard the fortune of the day on what he deemed a perilous cast; and Junot profited by this unexpected cessation of the battle, to reform his broken columns: 1200 fresh troops now joined him; and, covered by his well-appointed cavalry, he retreated with order and celerity till he regained the pass of Torres Vedras, and placed the two armies in the relative positions which they had occupied the evening before.¹⁰

* Mackay was presented for this act with an appropriate medal from the Highland Society. Steward, a piper in the same gallant regiment being severely wounded would not suffer himself to be removed from the field; but being placed by his companions in a secure position, continued to animate his countrymen by playing the most inspiring of their national airs. Among the officers engaged in this combat, the heroism of generals Anstruther and Ferguson, and of colonel Burne (a man who had risen from the ranks) was particularly noticed.

¹⁰ The best apology that can be offered for this decision of sir H. Burrard, is made by colonel Napier, though he considers it as erroneous. The many interesting details and remarks on the battle of Vimiero, and the convention which fol-

The arrangements made by sir Harry did not long remain in force: for early on the morning of the twenty-second, sir Hew Dalrymple disembarked, and took the command out of his hands: that leader decided to advance on the twenty-third; he agreed however with Burrard, that the project was perilous, and required the concentration of all our troops; for which reason he did not rescind the order for Moore's advance to the Merceira, though sir Arthur Wellesley strongly remonstrated against it, as interfering with the supplies necessary for our army, when the fleet was likely to be driven off the coast by gales; and the bishop of Oporto had shamefully failed in all his promises. While sir Hew was in a state of deliberation, a flag of truce opportunely came from Junot; who, being alarmed by reports from the capital, desired a cessation of hostilities, previous to a convention, for the French to evacuate Portugal: this proposal, by which a large army, possessing strong places of defence before Lisbon, as well as a retreat on Elvas and Almeida, might be quietly disposed of, seemed a very unexpected advantage to Dalrymple, at a period of doubt and difficulty: an armistice was accordingly agreed to, which formed the basis of what was then, and is still called, the convention of Cintra; though the transaction actually took place thirty miles from that spot: its essential articles were, that the English government should, at its own expense, transport the French army to any port between Rochefort and L'Orient; not to be considered prisoners of war, but free to serve; and that all property, public or private, justly obtained, was to be untouched, and might either be sold in Portugal, or carried off into France: the embarkation was to take place in three divisions, the first to sail within seven days: no native of Portugal was to be molested on account of his political conduct during the French occupation of the country; and such persons as were desirous of with-

CHAP.
XLIX.
1808.

Convention
of Cintra.

ward it, the reader is referred to his 'History of the Peninsular War;' a work, which deserves a place on the same shelf with Sallust and Cæsar, Thucydides and Polybius.

CHAP.
XLIX.

1808.

drawing into France, were to have full liberty to dispose of their effects. When the insurrection in Spain first broke out, Junot had ordered all the Spanish troops, serving in his army, to be confined on board ships and hulks then in harbor: in return for their deliverance, the British commander engaged to obtain the release of such French subjects as were detained in Spain, without having been taken in battle: sir Charles Cotton concluded a separate convention with admiral Siniavin, for the surrender of the Russian squadron in the Tagus; which, with its stores, was to be held by England, as a deposit, till six months after the conclusion of a peace; the admiral, officers, and seamen being sent to Russia, without any restriction as to future service, at the expense of Great Britain. In Portugal, as well as in England, the terms of this convention produced universal discontent: the Portuguese general Freire, the very existence of whose army was unknown to sir Hew Dalrymple, entered a formal protest against it; and the coolness which already existed between the two services was thus increased: it appeared however that his interference was intimately connected with a design, which that meddling and ambitious priest, the bishop of Oporto, had conceived, to place himself at the head of the insurrectional authorities, and transfer the seat of government from Lisbon to the former city.¹¹

On the fifteenth of September, the French troops after suffering many insults and assassinations at the hands of the Portuguese, from which the British could not wholly protect them, completed their embarkation; and Portugal was freed from the presence of invaders, who, during ten months, had inflicted on her the most grievous calamities: our forces however did not begin their march toward Spain till long after the ratification of the convention. That fatal measure drew with it a long train of disasters and disgrace; one of its first effects being to suspend all military operations; while the three commanders returned to England where an inquiry which

¹¹ For a full account of this plot, see Napier's History, vol. i. ch. vi.

was instituted relative to their conduct. During the course of this investigation, sir A. Wellesley exhibited a trait of magnanimity very honorable to his character: forgetting the want of delicacy in sir H. Burrard, who snatched the laurels from his hand just as he had grasped them, he generously strove to vindicate that officer's subsequent conduct: no reflection *could* be cast on his own: sir Hew Dalrymple therefore became a political scapegoat to bear the sins of ministers: in fact, they ought to have been put on their trial, not the generals; and to the vote of censure passed on sir Hew they were justly entitled.¹²

After the evacuation of Lisbon, a regency was established; which, by restoring comparative tranquillity, taught the people to estimate the advantages they had obtained from their British allies, and preserved them from the pernicious designs of the bishop and his factious coadjutors: nor was it very long, before the nation in general, laying aside that extravagant pride and vain boasting which produced only intemperate counsels and futile acts, clung to its ancient protectress, and submitted to her direction, with a docility and patience that was attended with the happiest results.

Spain, on the contrary, preserved all her pride, and haughtily rejected all advice. Unconscious of her own weakness, and remembering only her former state, when she was the oppressor rather than the oppressed, when she granted rather than solicited assistance, she deceived herself, and for a time deceived others, by the lofty attitude which she

State of
Spain.

¹² The character of sir Hew, as fitted for high command in the Peninsula at such a time as this may be understood from the despatches of sir Arthur Wellesley now made public. 'You will learn,' says he, in a letter to lord Castlereagh urging his recall, 'from others the various causes which I must have for being dissatisfied, not only with the military and public measures of the commander-in-chief, but with his treatment of myself.' And again he observes to colonel Murray, respecting sir Hew; 'that he was the only one of whom he (sir Arthur) had not been the right hand for some years past.' With regard to ministers, lord H. Petty, discussing their conduct in the house of commons, declared that 'as the convention was referable to the inadequacy of equipments, to the want of necessary information, the want of cavalry, the want of artillery-horses, and the want of instructions to our commanders; and as those wants and that inadequacy, were chargeable to the ministers of the crown, they, and they only should be visited with the universal odium of that measure.'

assumed; so that while the Portuguese were represented as objects of contempt, the vigor and elasticity of Spanish patriotism became a theme of general praise; and a speedy triumph over the base aggression of Bonaparte was confidently anticipated: but blind confidence and arrogant presumption were in this case egregiously mistaken for wisdom, energy, and valor. Even after Joseph Bonaparte had given the utmost possible effect to the catastrophe at Baylen, by abandoning Madrid, and raising the siege of Saragossa, the Spaniards were unable to follow up their success: all the advantage gained was an opportunity of again proclaiming Ferdinand 'the beloved,' king of Spain; which event, instead of uniting hearts and hands in the active service of their country, merely set at work a thousand instruments of base and busy intrigue: the only energy of the nation lay in its undisciplined peasantry; but they who ought to have directed them, were tainted members of the body politic; and the feeble, dilatory operations of Spanish armies were not less owing to the incapacity of their generals, than to the boundless arrogance and vile selfishness of local governments: among these the juntas of Seville, Galicia, and the Asturias were eminently notorious; all their efforts being directed to secure the permanency of their own authority; while the money and resources both of England and Spain were eagerly applied to advance this pernicious object. If a volume were written on the state of Spain, and the character of its population at this period, better information could not be obtained on the subject, than that which is contained in the following short extract from colonel Napier's standard work:—'The mass of the nation, blinded by personal hatred, thought only of revenge; while the leaders, arrogant and incapable, neither sought nor wished for any higher motive of action: without unity of design, and devoid of arrangement, their policy was mean and personal; their military efforts were abortive; and a rude, unscientific warfare disclosed at once the barbarous violence of Spanish character, and the utter decay of Spanish institu-

is.¹³ A desire to amend that character, by
moting reformation in their institutions, had no
re in the policy of our cabinet: the time was not
arrived, when it began to concern itself about
ular rights, or the general interests of humanity;
while the French emperor, even in the midst of
unjust aggressions, was meditating a regeneration
he people;¹⁴ Great Britain, considering the Spanish
irrection only as an opening through which Napo-
himself might be assailed, allied herself to all the
otry and fanaticism of the nation. Such a charge,
ugh strictly true, is perhaps rather unfairly pressed
inst the administration of that day by the distin-
shed author of 'The Peninsular War:' in fact, the
rthrow of Napoleon was rightly made the grand
ct of our policy; for the safety of England, as well
he existence of European liberty, depended on the
nction of the tyrant: he, by his abduction of Fer-
und, had fixed that monster in the very hearts of
people: he also, by an attack on church property,
a dissolution of many religious establishments,
enlisted the bigotry of the Spanish nation against
self: without allying ourselves therefore to its
ticism, and to the cause of Ferdinand, we could
have entered the country, but as enemies: besides,
as hardly then a time for quixotic efforts in favor
ew political institutions; which, perhaps, can never
rofitably and permanently conferred on a degene-
race, except after an ordeal calculated to render
proper recipient of such blessings: whatever
ie therefore may have attached itself to the British
net subsequently, when 'the beloved' Ferdinand
restored to Spain, and no efforts were then made

CHAP.
XLIX.
— 1808.

¹³ol. i. p. 266.

I have,' (said he, in his speech to the Spanish delegates at Madrid on the December, 1808) 'taken measures to tranquillize all classes, knowing that men suspense is intolerable. I have preserved the religious orders, but led the number of monks, who will remain in their convents—priests ought le consciences, *but not exercise any exterior or corporal jurisdiction.* I have ed the INQUISITION, a tribunal against which Europe and the age alike n: feudal rights are also abolished; every man may now establish mills, weirs, fisheries; and the industry of every honest and loyal man has hence- fair field for its exercise.....the present generation may differ in opinions; ir descendants will bless me as the regenerator of your country.'

CHAP.
XLIX.

1808.

to protect those who had bled with us in his cause, from the most grievous persecutions under that contemptible bigot, Mr. Perceval's administration is free from reproach: its principal fault consisted in not having made due preparation for an event which had been long foreseen;¹⁵ in not having drawn its own forces from useless expeditions, and concentrated them for a grand attack, before Spanish enthusiasm had evaporated; in selecting incapable officers for high commands; and in employing agents, whose folly and inexperience rendered them dupes to interested and designing men. 'These were empowered,' says colonel Napier, 'to distribute money, arms, and succors of clothing and ammunition; but the want of system and forethought in our cabinet was palpable from the injudicious zeal of inferior agents, each of whom conceived himself competent to direct the whole of our political and military transactions.'¹⁶ Hence not only were British supplies lavishly wasted on ambitious juntas and antiquated commanders, while armies were left unprovided with the common necessities of life; but the whole tenor of affairs differed widely from official reports, and occasioned serious losses, both of treasure and of life. The only person who appeared to understand rightly the nature of Spanish affairs, or the character of the insurrection, was Mr. Charles Stuart, our excellent envoy at Madrid; and his greatest trouble consisted in establishing a right to control the proceedings of other civil and military agents: yet when he had effected this object, and had gained not only the confidence of the

¹⁵ 'The subjugation of Portugal,' says colonel Napier, 'was neither a recent nor a secret project of Napoleon. In 1806, Mr. Fox, penetrating this design, had sent lord Rosslyn, lord St. Vincent, and general Simcoe, on a mission to Lisbon, to warn the court, that a French army for the invasion of Portugal was assembling at Bayonne, and to offer the assistance of a British force: but the Portuguese cabinet affected to disbelieve the information; Mr Fox died; and the Prussian war diverted Napoleon's attention to more important objects.'—vol. i. p. 164.

¹⁶ 'The fault,' he observes, 'did not attach so much to the agents, as to the ministers who selected them: it was difficult for inexperienced men to avoid the snare. Living with the chiefs of armies actually in the field, being in the habit of daily intercourse with them, holding rank in the same service, and dependent on their politeness for every convenience, the agent was in a manner forced to see as the general saw, and to report as he wished. A simple spy would have been far more efficacious.'—vol. i. p. 273.

Spaniards, but such experience as would have been eminently useful to the British generals, he was superseded to make room for Mr. Hookam Frere, one of Canning's literary associates; a gentleman of high classical attainments; but totally deficient in that experience, which was requisite to guide him in one of the most difficult situations that ever fell to the lot of man.

Of all the Spanish armies, after the battle of Baylen, that of Andalusia was most efficient: it consisted of 30,000 regular troops, with a good train of artillery; but was constrained to remain idle by the vile government of Seville, to support the authority of that body over the other Andalusian juntas. A month elapsed after Dupont's capitulation, before Castaños made his entry into the capital with a division of 7000 men, leaving the same number at Toledo, and the rest about the Sierra Morena. When Bessières retired, after the defeat at Baylen, Blake occupied Leon, Astorga, and the pass of Manzanal, but would not enter into the plain without cavalry; and Cuesta, a choleric arbitrary old officer, who had quarrelled with Blake, not only refused to transfer his dragoons to the latter, at the command of the junta of Castile and Leon; but, having collected and armed 10,000 peasants, he threatened to punish the junta, as interfering with the province, of which he was captain-general: so Blake was obliged to carry his army, by forced marches, to the rugged district of Santander, between Biscay and the Asturias. The Murcian and Valencian army separated; general Llamas, with 12,000 infantry and a few horse, took the road to Madrid; while St. Marc carried the Valencians to the relief of Saragossa; where Palafox, a contemptible commander, who had usurped the title of a hero, displayed inordinate presumption, and assumed supreme authority. The infantry of the Estremadurian army, composed of new levies, was strengthened by some battalions of the Walloon and royal guards, being supplied with all needful equipments by sir Hew Dalrymple: it had 4000 cavalry, which, though useless in Estremadura,

CHAP.
XLIX.

1808.

its commander, Galluzzo, refused to send either to Blake or to Madrid; though earnestly pressed by sir Hew, as well as by the juntas of Badajos and Seville. Meanwhile the Spanish captives, released from Portugal, were clothed, armed, and sent to Catalonia in British transports: they also carried 10,000 stand of arms, with ammunition, for that province; in which the war was conducted on both sides, without any reference to movements of the main armies: at a period somewhat later, our fleet landed at Santander more than 10,000 well-disciplined Spanish soldiers, under the marquis de la Romana, who had been very ingeniously extricated from their quarters in Holstein, Sleswig, Jutland, and the Danish isles: these, being equipped from the British stores, proceeded by divisions to join Blake's army: all the corps were many days' march from the enemy and from each other; while their chiefs, at variance with the juntas, and at enmity between themselves, were inactive or doing mischief.

In this fancied state of security, the people of Biscay prepared to rise; the duke del Infantado and others at Madrid made strenuous efforts to hasten an explosion, which they ought to have restrained till the English and Blake could assist them; but before the former could land their succors, and while the latter was still in the mountains, general Merlin with 3000 grenadiers came down on the wretched Biscayans, and quenching the insurrection in their blood, destroyed one of the principal resources which Blake had in prospect. A French corps then advanced toward Saragossa, and Palafox in alarm threatened the junta of Castile with vengeance; a council of war was held at Madrid, and a plan of operations drawn out; but Castaños, the captain-general, was unable to march for want of money, since the maritime provinces intercepted and absorbed all the English supplies: in this dilemma, colonel Doyle drew bills on the government of Seville, payable out of 2,000,000 dollars just transmitted to the junta, through Mr. Duff at Cadiz: that unprincipled body however would have dishonored

these bills, had not the energetic remonstrance of major Cox been seconded by the discovery of a plot against their lives, concocted at Madrid: they then forwarded 200,000 dollars, with which the troops were put in motion; and fresh levies to the number of 40,000 were enrolled; but Napoleon's plan of disarming the country had been carried so completely into effect, that only 3,000 muskets could be procured: in this dilemma, the duke del Infantado, and the other governing powers, wrote to sir Hew Dalrymple, requesting that the firelocks of Junot's army, and the arms of the Portuguese people, should be sent to the frontier, and thence forwarded to Madrid: and this extraordinary proposition was made at a time when England had already transmitted to Spain 160,000 muskets; 50,000 of which were shut up in the arsenal at Seville by its junta, while the national armies were left defenceless.¹⁷

CHAP.
XLIX.
1808.

So odious had the provincial juntas at length become, through their selfishness, rapacity, and inability, that a northern cortes was convoked at Lugo, chiefly through the exertions of Mr. Stuart; which, in unison with the council of Castile, declared for a central and supreme government: this plan however was opposed, in an underhand manner, by the flagitious junta of Seville, as well as by the bishop of Orense and the junta of Galicia; who were prepared to assert the supremacy of that province over all others: but these counterplots were disconcerted by the quickness and decision of the Bailly Valdez of Castile, one of the very few disinterested men of the time; but obnoxious to Cuesta, who was anxious to subject all powers to a military despotism: that sullen and ferocious soldier sent an order to disannul all their proceedings; and his being rejected, he abandoned every operation of the campaign, which in the council at Madrid he had promised to aid; then falling back on Segovia with 12,000 men, he arrested the deputies, and shut up Valdez in its tower, with an intention of trying him by a military commission: still in the midst of all this

¹⁷ Napier's History, vol. i. p. 285.

CHAP.
XIX.

1808.

confusion and violence, the plan of forming a central government gained ground; and after fresh disputes, deputies from the different juntas agreed to meet for that purpose at Aranjuez; shrinking from publicity, and refusing to identify themselves with the people in the capital, lest they should expose themselves to just indignation before they had consolidated their power. The central court being formed, and the count Florida Blanca, a man in the last stage of decrepitude, chosen first president for three months, the members proceeded to assert their dignity by ordering Cuesta to release his captive, and repair to Aranjuez: at first he haughtily repelled their interference; but finally was obliged to yield: no formal proceedings were held on the case; and the old general was detained at the seat of government, a kind of prisoner at large; until, for the misfortune of his country, he was, by subsequent events, again placed at the head of an army.¹⁸

Such was the state of affairs when lord William Bentinck joined Mr. Stuart at Madrid; and his lordship adopting the opinions of that eminent person, earnestly co-operated with him in directing the attention of the central junta to the necessity of military preparations and active exertions for defence: but while the provincial juntas still retained their misused power in their own districts, their folly, improvidence, self-confidence, and indecision, were even surpassed by the central government. Scarcely were its members assembled, before all hopes of a vigorous administration were blasted: their very first act was to divide themselves into sections, each being supreme and independent: attentive to their own interests, they declared their persons inviolable, like the ancient Roman tribunes, and appropriated to themselves high-sounding titles and large salaries: but they constantly deferred the election of a commander-in-chief, notwithstanding all remonstrances, and confirmed the old generals in their independent commands; they totally disregarded the wishes of our government, though the

¹⁸ See Napier, vol. i. p. 301.

Spanish nation had already received from us 200,000 muskets, with clothing and ammunition in proportion, and sixteen millions of dollars: yet their ragged armies were destitute even of arms and bread; while their improvident rulers had contracted a large debt; and now, with unparalleled insolence, demanded from England an immediate gift of ten millions of dollars, and stores that might have sufficed a well-governed army for many years: 'the picture,' says colonel Napier, from whose pages the above sketch is chiefly drawn, 'may appear exaggerated; for without having seen, it is difficult for one to believe the extent of a disorder, that paralysed the enthusiasm of a whole people:' but nothing, perhaps, contributed more to Spanish imbecility and British loss than the system of agents instituted by our government, chiefly through its ardent love of patronage: the control which those persons exercised over the prodigal supplies sent from England, conferred on them a mistaken dignity in the eyes of the Spaniards, which should have been reserved for the highest authorities only; while the individuals themselves, who were its objects, totally mistook their designed character; and being insensibly influenced by the Spanish estimate of it, pretended to direct even our military commanders, and misled all parties with whom they were concerned.

Such were the preparations made by Spain in September and October to meet the exigences of a period replete with difficulty and danger: in the middle of September, the French forces, amounting to more than 90,000 men under arms, exclusive of troops in Catalonia, were posted under marshals Bessières, Ney, and Moncey, generals Saligny, Dorsenne, Monthion, La Grange, and Drouet, on a line extending from Bilboa to Alfaro: to oppose them, the Spanish troops were divided into three principal masses, called the armies of the right, centre, and left, under the respective commands of Palafox, Castaños, and Blake; but in positions which left the advantage greatly to their opponents. All were acting without concert, on double lines of operation, and against an enemy far superior

CHAP.
XLIX.

1808.

Confede-
ration of
France and
Russia.

to them in numbers and discipline, as well as in the art of war. Napoleon had returned on the fifth of September to Paris, where he reviewed the legions which he had recalled from Prussia and Poland; consisting, not of French alone, but men of all countries and languages, of all religions and of none, united together in one disciplined band, for the purpose of ravaging the peninsula, and subjecting it to his tyrannical control: in his address to them, he observed, that 'the hideous presence of the British leopards contaminated the land of Spain and Portugal; and that a true Frenchman could never enjoy rest till the sea was open and free.' While this army was on its march, and preparations made for calling forth conscriptions of two years to augment its ranks, Bonaparte set out to meet the emperor Alexander and the dependent German princes at Erfurth: it did not escape his penetration that Austria lay like a hunted lion indignant in the toils; and was ready, as soon as she had renewed her strength, to burst them, and attack her enemy. She had not only increased her regular force, but was diligently arming her *landwehr*; for which proceeding he had reproached prince Metternich, at a public levee in August: but tidings of Spanish resistance, and British success in Portugal, gave confidence and resolution to the court of Vienna; Napoleon therefore determined at once to menace its sovereign, by arranging a co-operation of Russia and the confederated states of the Rhine against him, if he should attempt to take advantage of the Spanish war. Resulting from this meeting was a proposal for peace to Great Britain: the overture was made in the usual diplomatic forms; but accompanied by a joint letter from the emperors of France and Russia to his Britannic majesty; and it was answered officially, by Mr. Canning, in a manner consistent with the honor and feelings of the British nation. However desirous both government and people might be to put an end to the miseries of war, they were prepared to endure any extremity before they sacrificed the interests of their allies, by negotiating a separate peace, and leaving

Sicily and Sweden, Spain and Portugal, to the tender mercies of the Corsican.

CHAP.
XLIX.

1808.

On his return to Paris, Napoleon assured its legislative body that the emperor of Russia and himself were determined to make great sacrifices, in order to procure for the hundred millions of men whom they represented, an early enjoyment of maritime commerce; and he announced his resolution to depart in a few days to place himself at the head of his armies, in order to crown the king of Spain at Madrid, and to plant his eagles on the forts of Lisbon. Blake, after a slight temporary success, had failed again in raising the province of Biscay; but the other armies were put in motion; and while all things announced the approach of a great crisis, such was the apathy of the supreme junta, that the best friends of the Spanish cause looked forward to a defeat as the only means of exciting national energy. Marshal Ney was soon able to retake Bilbao, whence the French had retired before Blake: the Spanish armies of the right and centre then advanced toward the Ebro; and after various evolutions, Blake again attacked and carried Bilbao. After this, the head of the grand French army arrived in Spain; the Castilians joined the army of the centre; the Asturians united with Blake; and a plan of operations singularly absurd was arranged by Castaños and Palafox: in consequence of this, the Spaniards crossed the Ebro, and the French prepared themselves for a general attack: skirmishes took place at San-guessa, Logroño, and Lerim; the Spaniards were driven back over the Ebro, and Logrono was taken; while colonel Cruz, with a Spanish battalion, surrendered at Lerim. Internal dissensions and violent quarrels between the commanders succeeded to external misfortunes: Castaños, incensed at the ill conduct of the Castilians, dismissed general Pignatelli, and incorporated his troops with the Andalusian divisions; while Palafox arrogantly censured Castaños, against whom a cabal was formed in the supreme junta: his enemies actively spread reports to his disadvantage; deserters, scattered over the country, declared that all

CHAP.
XLIX.

1808.

the generals were traitors alike; and the people deceived by the central junta, and even by false rumours, respected neither justice nor government; but committed the most scandalous excesses, and perpetrated the basest crimes.¹⁹

In the mean time, the road from Bayonne to Vittoria was covered with the advancing columns of the great French army; which, as they arrived, were incorporated with the forces then in Spain: they formed eight divisions, or *corps d'armée*; each provided with light cavalry, artillery, and all necessaries, enabling it to take the field as an independent force; but the imperial guards and light cavalry were separately arranged. These corps were respectively placed under the command of marshals Victor, Bessières, Moncey, Léfèvre, Mortier, and general St. Cyr, and Junot: the seventh corps, under St. Cyr, was destined to act in Catalonia; the others were, in the latter end of October, assembled or assembling in Navarre and Biscay. As the emperor's object confined the French to a rigorous system of defence in order to encourage the presumption of Spanish generals, Blake mistook this apparent inactivity for timidity, and with his usual rashness resolved to push forward: after a series of operations, during which colonel Napier observes, *he omitted no error the circumstances rendered it possible to commit*, and several unfortunate actions at Durango, Zornosa, and Valmaceda, with the ultimate loss of Bilboa, his retreat became opened to the peril of his situation; and he retired to the mountainous region of Espinosa, where he was joined in his retreat by the wreck of Roncesvalles troops; the whole being concentrated in a strong position, covering the intersection of the roads from Santander, Villarcayo, and Reynosa.

Bonaparte
arrives in
Spain.

Bonaparte, accompanied by the dukes of Dalmeida and Montebello, arrived at Bayonne on the thirteenth of November; and having quitted it on the evening of the fourteenth, he reached Vittoria the same evening: there he immediately arranged the plan of his campaign, and put in motion

¹⁹ Napier, vol. i. p. 369.

the enormous masses of his army with a celerity that marked his genius. Soult took the command of the second corps; and with a vigor emulating that of his imperial master, totally overthrew the Spanish army under the conde de Belvedere at Gamonal, and the united forces of Blake and Romana at Espinosa; laying the north of Spain prostrate, and securing the whole coast from St. Sebastian to the frontier of the Asturias; while, by a judicious disposal of small garrisons and moveable columns, the communication of the army with France was kept open. The emperor's head-quarters were now at Burgos; whence he let loose 8000 cavalry over Leon and Castile, and raised contributions almost up to the gates of Salamanca: changing his front of battle, he directed marshals Lasnes and Ney to fall on the forces under Castaños and Palafox: the former of whom wished to retreat; but being overruled by the headstrong and presumptuous Palafox, he awaited the onset, and was utterly defeated at Tudela; 15,000 of the disconcerted Spaniards escaping to Saragossa, while the rest retreated with Castaños toward Madrid, leaving behind them all their artillery, ammunition, and stores. This success, however, fell far short of what Napoleon had a right to expect from his previous dispositions; and he expressed considerable dissatisfaction with Ney; to whose erroneous directions and dilatory movements Castaños owed the safety of his troops, which were re-assembled at Calatayud: he now ordered Lasnes to proceed against Palafox at Saragossa, while his own attention was fixed on Madrid, the great rallying-point of his discomfited opponents: having forced the passes of the Somosierra, where a few squadrons of Polish cavalry, as if in very derision of the Spaniards, attacked and carried the batteries, though defended by 12,000 troops, and in a situation nearly impregnable, the imperial army descended on the other side of the mountains: the central junta fled from Aranjuez to Seville; and the remnant of Castaños's army turned toward Alcazar del Rey, where he resigned his command to La Peña, against whom soon afterwards the

CHAP.
XLIX.

1808.

troops mutinied; and the duke del Infantado took his place. For eight days, tumult and disorder of every description reigned in Madrid; and on the second of December the French were before its walls: the central junta, whose criminal apathy deprived the place of all external defence, had been anxious that its wretched population should endure the horrors of an assault; but Napoleon avoided the folly of committing his troops with an infuriated mob, intrenched in strong houses: he accordingly took possession of the suburbs; bombarded the Retiro; and having established himself in a position commanding the city, forced it to capitulate on the fourth.

After some acts of retribution, and decrees to conciliate the liberal Spaniards, such as the abolition of the Inquisition, and the suppression of many convents, he projected a vast plan of future operations: his intention was to invade Galicia, Andalusia, and Valencia by his lieutenants; and to lead the sixth corps, with the imperial guards and the reserve, against Lisbon, in person. The first corps was stationed at Toledo, though its light cavalry scoured the country up to the Sierra Morena; the fourth was at Talavera, on its march toward Portugal; the second on the Carrion, ready to penetrate into Galicia; the eighth was broken up; its divisions joining the second, and Junot taking the place of marshal Moncey, who was called to Madrid for a special service: the fifth corps was ordered to advance from Vittoria to reinforce the third, then employed against Saragossa; and the seventh was constantly in Catalonia.²⁰

To oppose this immense force and these grand combinations, what numbers or discipline remained in the Spanish armies? what ability in their leaders? what enthusiasm in the people? The duke del Infantado presided over a few thousands of miserable and mutinous fugitives at Cuenca; the Valencian army was shut up in Saragossa; the passes of the Sierra Morena were occupied by about 5000 raw levies sent thither by the junta at Seville: Galluzzo,

²⁰ Napier, vol. i. p. 414.

who undertook to defend the Tagus with a wretched corps, had been suddenly attacked and defeated at Almaraz by a detachment of the fourth corps: Romana was at Leon, at the head of about 18,000 fugitives collected after the defeat at Espinosa; of whom only 5000 were armed: in Galicia there was no army: in the Asturias the spirit of the province was crushed by a miserable junta; while the central government, which ought to have directed its efforts to remove the evils that oppressed the country, and to concentrate its force, was still actuated by the same selfish and ambitious views which had hitherto distinguished that vile body. Napoleon in the mean time was in possession of the capital, the chief fortresses, and main lines of communication between the provinces; no check being interposed to his progress, except the heroic city of Saragossa on the one side, and a comparatively small British army on the other: to the operations of that army we must now direct attention.

CHAP.
XLIX.
1808.

Sir John Moore assumed the command, and carried it on, under circumstances calculated to depress the spirit of any man, who had not large resources in a character that might defy malice, and abilities capable of contending with adverse fortune. This very distinguished officer embarked for Portugal with the insults offered to him by lord Castlereagh ringing in his ears;¹ and when, in consequence of the convention of Cintra, the conduct of the war in that country was committed to his guidance, the projects of our cabinet were as vague, as its knowledge of Spanish transactions and French resources was imperfect and delusive. The sixth of October arrived before a despatch, containing the first determinate plan of a campaign, declared that 30,000 infantry and 4000 cavalry were to be employed in the north of Spain: 10,000 of these were to be sent thither by sea from England; and sir John Moore might join them either by a voyage round the coast, or by a march through the country. Strong objections existing

Campaign
of sir John
Moore.

¹ Napier, vol. i. p. 505.

CHAP.
XLIX.

1808.

against the former plan, he was obliged to determine on the latter; and thus the dangerous necessity was imposed on him of acting on a double line of operations; with two corps, that could not be expected to unite, except in the neighborhood of an active enemy, and at a long distance from their bases.

The head of the mighty French host coming from Germany was already in the passes of the Pyrenees, when sir John was beginning to organise an army of new soldiers, in a poor unsettled country; with a military chest nearly empty; without the power of obtaining money on bills; and without any chance of correct information, though pestered with false intelligence from all quarters: no commander-in-chief had been appointed to the Spanish armies; but after a march of 300 miles in the rainy season for the purpose of uniting his scattered forces, and another equally long to the banks of the Ebro, he was expected to concert a plan of operations with generals acting independently of each other, themselves ignorant, jealous, and quarrelsome; and their troops undisciplined and insubordinate: moreover, all this was to be accomplished in time to defeat an enemy already in the field, master of prodigious resources, and accustomed to the most rapid movements, as well as to the grandest combinations: the duke of York, aware of the difficulties of Moore's situation, and the inefficiency of means placed at his disposal, sent a memorial to our ministers, recommending the employment of 60,000 men in this service, showing the practicability of procuring that force; and forewarning them that 'there was danger of the Spaniards being beaten before the British troops could arrive at the scene of action;' but his advice was utterly neglected!

In spite of all difficulties, not the least of which was a failure in the contract for supplies, the British general so strenuously exerted himself, that within twenty days after his appointment, the whole army was in motion; and the staff quitted Lisbon on the twenty-sixth of October. Magazines having been established at Almeida, our troops marched in three

columns; the first by Alcantara and Coria, the second, by Abrantes, the third by Coimbra; all having Ciudad Rodrigo as a point of direction: information however being received respecting the miserable state of the roads, it was thought necessary to separate the artillery from the rest of the army: accordingly, the grand *parc*, escorted by 1000 troopers and 3000 infantry, was sent, by the road of Talavera, under sir John Hope; who conducted this part of the expedition so as to extort unqualified praise from all military men; sir David Baird arrived at Corunna on the thirteenth of October; when, to his great astonishment, the junta of Galicia, disliking the trouble of a disembarkation, refused him permission to land; their tardy acquiescence was only obtained through an application to the supreme junta at Aranjuez; but his reception was cold and dispiriting in the extreme; and as he came without money, sir John Moore was obliged to supply him with £8000 from his own scanty store, to enable him to put his division in motion: yet at this time, our new plenipotentiary, who came in the same fleet, had 2,000,000 dollars to lavish on the infamous juntas of Spain.

On the eighth of November, Moore was at Almeida, his artillery at Truxillo in Estremadura, and sir David Baird's division at Corunna; while Blake was on that very day routed and flying before his enemies towards Espinosa: the conde de Belvedere was at Burgos with 13,000 miserable troops, and Napoleon at Vittoria with 170,000 of the best soldiers of France. At this time letters from lord William Bentinck and colonel Graham, exposing all the imprudence, vanity, and ignorance of the Spanish generals, created much uneasiness in sir John Moore's mind, who foresaw the obstacles that might occur to the junction of his own troops from the ill success of the Spaniards: but, as no great misfortune had yet been experienced, he determined to advance, and arrived at Ciudad Rodrigo on the eleventh, the very day on which the fatal battle of Espinosa took place: on the thirteenth, the van of the British army entered Salamanca, at the moment

when Blake's fugitive troops were finally dispersed at Reynosa, leaving the first, second, and fourth French corps, amounting to 70,000 men, free to act in any quarter. Sir John soon discovered that, to the obstacles arising from rashness and cowardice in the Spanish armies, a want of enthusiasm in the people was now to be added; for the defeat of the conde de Belvedere, which laid Castile open to the enemy's incursions, while it uncovered the march of the British and compromised their safety, excited no sensation of alarm, precaution, or defence: nor was he even informed of the event till a week after it took place; though Valladolid, which was only distant three marches, was occupied by the French cavalry. From insuperable delays, it was the twenty-third of November, before the British centre, consisting of 12,000 infantry and six guns, was concentrated at Salamanca: on that day the total defeat of Castaños and Palafox at Tudela left the third and sixth corps of the French army disposable; while the emperor, from his central position at Burgos, was free to move either on Madrid or Salamanca, his victorious troops being already in possession of Valladolid; the very town, which, a few days before, the Spanish government had pointed out to our general as the base of his operations, and where his magazines might conveniently be formed.

On the twenty-sixth, the head of Baird's column was at Astorga, with its rear extending beyond Lugo; and Hope was at the Escorial, with his rear at Talavera: but the enemy's second corps was on the Deva, threatening Leon and the Asturias, while his cavalry covered all the plains; the fourth corps was descending by Carrion and Valladolid to seize the pass of the Guadarama; and Napoleon was preparing to force the Somosierra and attack Madrid.

Sir John was now placed in a situation of extreme difficulty: his instructions, founded in ignorance, merely directed him to advance, for the purpose of opening communications with the Spanish generals, and forming 'the plan of a campaign:' but the cam-

aign had been already decided against the Spaniards; no channels of intelligence had been pointed out to him; nor could he establish any system of spies, couriers, and posts, for want of money; in obedience to the expressed wishes of the British people and the orders of government, he had pushed forward to assist our allies, without magazines, or any means of forming them: trusting to the official assurance of our ministers that above 100,000 Spanish soldiers would protect his march, and that the enthusiasm of the people was prepared for any exertions, he found nothing among them but apathy and discord, presumption and deceit; whilst all solicitations for active, well-informed couriers to expedite his plans, were treated with utter contempt by the juntas, who, in the midst of this infamous apathy, continued to indulge in idle, insolent vaunts of national superiority.

At this time twenty days were required to bring up and concentrate all the forces: to advance in their divided state would have been to court destruction; and to retreat, while the Spanish army of the centre still kept the field, was repugnant to the generous and intrepid spirit of the British general. Rather than resort to such a remedy for the false position in which the governments of England and Spain had placed him, he contemplated a bold and daring enterprise;—to abandon all his communications with Portugal, throw himself into the heart of Spain, rally the army of Castaños, and with their combined forces defend the southern provinces, trusting to the effect which such a measure might produce on Spanish patriotism and courage. Respecting this important operation, which was not purely a military question, he determined to consult Mr. Frere, who had, unfortunately, superseded Mr. Stuart as British envoy at Madrid, and with whom he had been directed to communicate in all important matters: whilst waiting for a reply, he directed sir David Baird to push his division forward to Salamanca; but on the very day after he had thus written to the envoy, and all arrangements for executing his project were complete, a despatch from

CHAP.
XLIX.

1808.

Mr. Stuart made him acquainted with the disaster at Tudela: all hope of success then vanished; Spanish armies that did not exist, could not be rallied; and if Madrid should fall, nothing would remain to check an advance of the whole French force against him. The most practicable scheme now left seemed to be a retreat into Portugal; and this was determined on, being fully approved of by sir David Baird, who also had experienced the fallacy of Spanish promises and information: but in the mean time Napoleon forced the Somosierra, and summoned Madrid; while the supreme junta, accompanied by Mr. Frere, fled toward Badajos: Hope's division, with the artillery, was greatly endangered by an advance of the fourth corps; and it became necessary for the commander-in-chief to wait for his approach.

Retreat of
the British.

Sir John Moore's resolution created a great sensation at Madrid and Aranjuez: the junta deprecated such a proof of the state to which they had reduced their country; the cowardly traitor, Morla, with others of the same stamp, was prepared to abandon its cause; and the English plenipotentiary, being himself deceived on all points, became indignant that the general should decide on so important a movement without reference to his opinion: all therefore concurred in misleading him with false or imperfect intelligence: in consequence of their urgent importunities, and Hope's corps having fortunately joined the army, he directed sir David Baird, who had fallen back as far as Villa Franca, to concentrate his troops at Astorga, while he himself prepared to advance.

His plan of operations was generous and bold. Supposing that the emperor was more anxious to strike a blow against the British than to occupy any Spanish province or city, he resolved to throw himself on the communications of the French army; hoping, if fortune should be favorable, that he might inflict a severe loss on the troops by which they were guarded before aid could arrive. If Napoleon, suspending his operations against the south, should send large detachments against him, Madrid would be succored; if not,

the British forces could hold their ground: the former supposition appeared more than probable; and thus to relieve the Spaniards, and give them breathing time, Moore, confiding in his own abilities and the courage of his troops, determined to measure swords even with Bonaparte.

On the ninth of December, colonel Graham, who had been sent forward toward the capital, returned with tidings of its surrender; but he also brought intelligence from two members of the flying junta, that large armies, under La Peña, Romana, and others, were still ready to co-operate strenuously with the British, and that the most energetic measures were in activity wherever the enemy's presence did not prevent them. Under such circumstances, sir John did not stop his movement, which he still hoped might act as a diversion for the south of Spain: on the eleventh therefore he advanced, having however continued preparations for a retreat on Portugal, by the establishment of magazines at Benevente, Astorga, Villa Franca, and Lugo. On the thirteenth, headquarters were at Alaejos, general sir Charles Stewart's² cavalry having the night before surprised a French post of fifty infantry and thirty dragoons. From these prisoners, as well as from an intercepted despatch, it was learned that Madrid was perfectly tranquil under its new conquerors, and that the French army believed the English to be on their retreat to Portugal: there appeared therefore a chance of surprising and routing the second corps, inferior as it was in numbers, and scattered in several divisions along the Carrion. Sir John calculated, that this danger, threatening Soult, would necessarily draw the emperor from Madrid, save the south, and give breathing time to the beaten corps of Galluzzo and Romana: he had also good reason to hope, from the ignorance of his movements, in which both Napoleon and Soult remained, that he might gain these advantages, and still give to the latter a heavy blow: the emperor however procured correct

² The present marquis of Londonderry.

CHAP.
XLIX.

1808.

information in time to save his lieutenant; but the other objects were obtained.

On the eighteenth, head quarters were at Castro Nuevo; from which place sir John Moore wrote to Romana, informing him of his intention to fall on Soult; desiring his co-operation, and requesting that the marquis would, according to his own plan, reserve the Asturias for his line of communication, and leave Galicia open to the British: but Romana was a man unfit for high command, though worthy of more confidence than the other Spanish generals. At this time, the British effective force of all arms rather exceeded 23,500 men, with sixty pieces of artillery; while Soult had not more than 11,000 infantry, with 1200 cavalry, unless he uncovered the important post of St. Andero: so that when the English, after a brilliant affair of cavalry under lord Paget, occupied Sahagun on the twenty-first, the French marshal abandoned Saldaña to concentrate his forces at Carrion.

On the twenty-third, Romana gave notice that the French were in motion on the side of Madrid; and in the same night, as the troops were on their march toward Carrion, reports came in that the whole French army was in motion to overwhelm them: the fourth corps had been halted at Talavera; the fifth at Vittoria; the eighth was closing up to reinforce the second; and the emperor himself was marching toward the Guadarama: hearing of sir John Moore's advance, he forgot the siege of Saragossa, the south of Spain, and the rock of Lisbon, on which he was hastening to plant his eagles; the different corps were all arrested in their movement; 10,000 men alone were left to awe the capital; and on the evening of the twenty-second, 50,000 were at the foot of the Guadarama mountains. Under storms of hail and drifting snow Napoleon led them in person through the passes of the Sierra, which had been reported as impracticable: on the twenty-sixth he was at Tordesillas with the imperial guard; while Ney, with the sixth corps, was at Rio Seco, and the dragoons of La Houssaye at Valladolid. 'If the

English pass to-day in their position'—so wrote this great master of war to marshal Soult—'they are lost: if they attack you with all their force, retire one day's march; the farther they proceed, the better for us: if they retreat, pursue them closely.' Full of hope, he then hastened to Valderas: but notwithstanding his rapid march, he was twelve hours too late: the British had crossed the Esla; and Soult was in full pursuit when the emperor's letter was written: thus sir John Moore had drawn the eagle from his prey, and his own army from destruction.

CHAP.
XLIX.
1808.

After some sharp skirmishing, and another brilliant action between the tenth hussars and a strong body of Ney's cavalry, in which the latter lost twenty killed, and 100 prisoners, the army arrived at Benevente: that station however was not long tenable; and sir John Moore determined to proceed by way of Leon to Astorga. When the British quitted this town, the cavalry remained behind, leaving parties to watch the fords of the Esla; on which, general Léfèbre Desnouettes, seeing only a few outposts on the plain, concluded they had nothing to support them, and crossed the river at a ford, with 600 horsemen of the imperial guard, to attack our piquets: these however being joined by a part of the third German hussars, and headed by the gallant general C. Stewart, bravely disputed the ground, till lord Paget came up with the tenth hussars, and charged the assailants: in an instant they were seen flying at full speed toward the river; into which, without breaking their ranks, they plunged, and gained the opposite heights: their unfortunate leader separated himself from the main body; and making towards a different part of the stream, was pursued; but refusing to stop when overtaken, he was wounded and brought in prisoner: in this skirmish, the British lost fifty men; the French left fifty-five on the plain, and had seventy wounded among those that repassed the Esla. In the mean time, Romana, abandoning Leon without firing a shot, occupied Astorga with his ragged fugitives, contrary to promise; and when

CHAP.
XLIX.
1809.

the British divisions marched into that city, such tumult and confusion arose, that no orders could be regularly executed, and no destruction of stores effected; but a great disorganisation of the army took place.

On the thirty-first, the flank brigades were detached from our army at Bonillas, and sent in the direction of Orense and Vigo, to lessen the pressure on its commissariat; while Romana, after doing so much mischief by crossing the British line of march, left his infantry to wander over the country as they pleased, and retired with his cavalry and a few guns to the valley of the Minho. On the first of January, 1809, Napoleon took possession of Astorga, where 70,000 French infantry, 10,000 cavalry, and 200 pieces of artillery were united; fully attesting the genius of the British commander, who had thus drawn the flower of the conqueror's army to these remote and desolate regions, and rendered its astonishing efforts useless by the order and rapidity of his retreat. Being recalled to Paris by a storm of war ready to burst over Germany, Napoleon committed the task of pursuit to the duke of Dalmatia; with whom he left near 60,000 men, with ninety pieces of artillery; allotting separate provinces to the different *corps d'armée*, and directing the imperial guard to return to France.

With 19,000 British troops, in a strong country, their commander might have given battle with every prospect of success against superior numbers; but to fight an enemy, who had at this time such an immense advantage, would have been a display of courage worse than useless: sir John Moore therefore determined to continue his retreat as expeditiously as possible to Villa Franca.

Both there, as well as at Bembibre and Calca bellos, the most dreadful excesses were committed by our troops, who broke open wine vaults, plundered magazines and private houses, and showed a complete relaxation of discipline. As all orders on this subject from head quarters were disregarded, the general

caused a marauder, taken in the act of plundering a store-house, to be led into the market place and shot, as an example to his associates. Nothing however could avail to restore discipline: the army had expected to fight; they could not enter into the political views which moved their commander, in his advance or in his retreat; and naturally felt indignant at turning their backs on the foe: many of the principal officers also had assumed a strange license; and their example increased the excesses of military insubordination. The French cavalry took advantage of this state of things to attack stragglers, many of whom were cut off, while others rejoined their ranks dreadfully mutilated, and bleeding from the sabres of the enemy: some of these latter were paraded, by way of example, before the army; 'and never,' says lord Londonderry, in his interesting Narrative of the War, 'did British troops look on a spectacle more appalling.'

CHAP.
XLIX.
1809.

The situation of our army was at this time dispiriting in the extreme: even its horses began to fail, chiefly from want of shoes and shoe-nails; so as soon as these noble animals foundered, they were shot, lest they should profit the enemy: on the fourth our reserve met an unexpected piece of good fortune, in a convoy of 40 waggons filled with arms, ammunition, shoes, and clothing; sent from England for Romana's troops, but moving *toward the enemy*; a circumstance highly characteristic of the Spanish mode of conducting public affairs: such of these stores as were required by our men were distributed among them, and the rest destroyed. In the midst of winter, in a dreary and desolate country, our soldiers, chilled and drenched by deluges of rain, and wearied by long and rapid marches, were almost destitute of fuel to cook their victuals; and it was with extreme difficulty that they procured shelter: their provisions were scanty, irregular, and difficult of attainment; the waggons, in which were their magazines, baggage, and stores, were deserted in the night by the Spanish drivers, terrified by the approach of the French. Thus baggage, ammunition, and stores were frequently destroyed or

Deplorable
condition of
the British
troops.

CHAP.
XLIX.

1809.

deserted; and at Nogales the rear guard was so harassed by continual skirmishes, that it became necessary to abandon our military chest: the sum of £25,000 in Spanish dollars had been kept near headquarters to answer sudden emergencies; and these were now rolled down the precipitous side of a mountain, whence part was gathered by the enemy, and part by the Gallician peasants. In the midst of such distresses, the Spaniards offered no assistance, showed no sympathy; on the contrary, they fled at the approach of the English, carrying with them every thing that could alleviate the distress, or contribute to the preservation of their allies. But beside the deplorable calamities of our soldiers, whose dead bodies frequently marked their line of march upon the snow, other sufferings still more painful to witness served to fill up this dreadful picture of the horrors of war; for multitudes of women and children followed our army; some in waggons, others on foot; numbers of whom perished miserably: many mothers were found frozen to death with infants lying on their breasts, and seeking sustenance from the lifeless bodies: one was remembered to have been seen by the way side, with two babes beside her, to whom she had just given birth before her broken spirit left its wretched tenement for ever. In these calamitous circumstances, nothing could have saved our army from destruction but the admirable conduct of its rear guard; and it is curious to remark, that, notwithstanding they were in constant action, they lost but few men, and not a single gun: three times they checked the advance of the enemy, were never broken, and suffered no misfortune: such are the advantages of discipline and subordination! yet for the credit even of our other in subordinate troops it must be said, that on no occasion did they fail to display their wonted energy when brought into contact with the enemy; establishing the observation of an experienced officer, 'that a British army, in a retreat, may be gleaned, but never reaped: for however great may be the misery of its soldiers, they will be clean at a review, and ready at a fight.'

As the road from Villa Franca to Lugo led through a rugged country, the cavalry had been sent on at once to the latter town. At Herrerias, on the fourth of January, sir John Moore received the first reports of his engineers, whom he had sent to inspect the harbors; and as it appeared that Vigo was not only more distant, but offered no position to cover an embarkation, he determined to direct his march on Corunna; to which place the transports were ordered round from Vigo: in the mean time, as the enemy was pressing him very closely, he sent orders to the leading division to halt at Lugo; his intention being to rally the troops, restore discipline, and offer battle to his pursuers. The whole army being assembled there on the sixth, sir John, in general orders, issued a severe but just rebuke both to officers and soldiers for their previous neglect of discipline, and announced his intention to fight the enemy: in an instant discipline, and subordination were restored to dispirited, straggling, drunken troops, the summit of whose desire was to meet their enemy face to face: when the French appeared in sight, nineteen thousand men of true British mould were still under arms; for, although their ranks had lately been dreadfully thinned, yet they had in some measure repaired their losses by a junction with three battalions of Baird's division between Villa Franca and Lugo. Soult however was too cautious and experienced a soldier to be tempted to engage in a general action at the desire of his antagonist; especially amid unknown and rugged mountains, where he could scarcely hope to cripple his foe: accordingly, both armies remained in position. On the seventh indeed, a partial action took place, when the French made a strong reconnoissance on our centre, with four guns and some squadrons under colonel Lallemante; but were received with perfect steadiness, while their guns were silenced by our artillery. Soon afterwards Soult made a feint against the British right, while he attacked their left with five guns and a column of infantry, pushing the outposts with much spirit: but at this moment Moore arrived at the scene of

CHAP.
XLIX.

1809.

action, and the enemy was repelled, so decisively, with a loss of 400 men, that he did not afterwards attempt the offensive: orders, however, were sent both to Laborde and Ney to hasten the march of their divisions; but the latter did not execute his order with precision: on the eighth, not a shot was fired; and Soult deferred his attack till the ninth; but the British general, not judging it prudent to act offensively, or delay the retreat, determined to quit his position in the night of the ninth, leaving his fires burning.

At ten o'clock, the regiments silently relinquished their ground, and began to retire in excellent order; but a dreadful storm of wind and rain suddenly rising, they lost sight of the marks set up for their guidance, and wandered among the intricate lanes and stone walls, with which the country is intersected: great disorganisation thence ensued, which led to a repetition of former calamities; while stragglers in such numbers diverged in search of plunder, that when pressed by their pursuers, they united under serjeant Newman of the forty-third regiment: this brave man, who was with a corps of invalids, having separated those that were incapable of resistance, formed the rest into divisions, and actually repulsed two squadrons of cavalry whose sabres thirsted for their blood: but the loss of men in the march from Lugo to Betanzos more than doubled that which had occurred in all the former part of the retreat. On the eleventh, our advanced guard beheld the walls of Corunna and the sea, with sensations similar to those which animated the 10,000 Greeks in their retreat from Persia: the eyes of their commander, however, still persecuted by his wayward fortune, looked in vain for the fleet, which was detained by contrary winds at Vigo: the men therefore were put into quarters; and from the twelfth to the sixteenth, sir John was occupied in choosing or strengthening his ground, and embarking his sick, wounded, and artillery on board the transports, which arrived on the fourteenth: twelve guns only were retained for the action that was expected; and almost all the horses, being foundered, were shot,

in order to prevent them from falling into the hands of the enemy: one favorable circumstance, arising from Spanish supineness, joined to the ignorance of British agents, made some compensation for these losses: a large magazine of stores and ammunition sent from England at the beginning of this contest, was now found unappropriated and forgotten: new muskets, flints, and bayonets therefore were distributed to the British soldiers, whose fire consequently told in a manner remarkably fatal to their opponents. Immense dépôts of gunpowder, not being required, were blown up with terrific shocks.

Had not a calamitous retreat diminished our numbers, or had the wretched Spaniards whom we came to assist, formed but a few divisions of disciplined troops, sir John Moore might have taken up a very advantageous post, on a rocky eminence, about four miles distant from Corunna; where he could have defied the attack of superior numbers: but this ground, if not fully occupied, would have enabled the enemy to turn both his flanks, and advance close up to the town: he was obliged therefore to relinquish it, for a lower and less commanding level: thus the French were allowed to deploy upon that high ridge, enclosing as it were, and commanding our position: Laborde's division was posted on the right; Merle's was in the centre; and Mermet's formed the left, where Soult had raised a formidable battery of eleven heavy guns on the rocks: the distance of this from the British right, under sir D. Baird, was about 1200 yards: midway, the little village of Elvina was held by the piquets of the fifteenth regiment; while the other dispositions of the British line were dictated by the nature of the ground, which was highly favorable to the enemy, who brought 20,000 men against 14,500 of their opponents.

A convention had been talked of, and a flag of truce recommended by our officers: every motion of this kind, however, was indignantly rejected by Moore, who in his last despatch sent by sir C. Stewart to our ministers on the thirteenth, assured them that he

CHAP.
XLIX.

1809.

would accept no terms dishonorable to the army, or to the country: in fact the hunted lion was at bay and determined to face his pursuers. On the evening of the fifteenth, the piquets of the two armies were engaged, when our men made a vigorous attack on two guns, by which they were galled: but as they approached the battery, a concealed party of infantry dashed forward and drove them back, after a discharge of musketry by which colonel Mackenzie, of the fifth, was slain.

Battle of
Corunna.

About two o'clock in the afternoon of the sixteenth, a general movement along the French line gave indication of an immediate attack: Soult made no idle display of evolutions; but, distributing his field-pieces along the front of his position, opened a tremendous fire from his heavy battery on the left, and descended the heights with three columns, covered by a cloud of skirmishers. The English piquets were instantly driven in: the village of Elvina was carried by the first column; which, dividing, attempted to turn Baird's right, and break his front at the same time: the second column advanced against our centre; and the third attacked sir John Hope's left at the village of Palavia Abaxo.

Moore, observing that the enemy showed no body of infantry beyond that which outflanked Baird's right, ordered general Paget to carry up the reserve, supported by general Fraser, turn the left of the French, and menace their great battery: at this moment Baird threw back the fourth regiment, which formed the right of his division, and opened a 'destructive' fire on the flank of the advancing enemy, so as to call forth Moore's energetic exclamation, 'Well done, Baird, that is exactly what I wished:!' in the mean time the fiftieth and forty-second regiments met those breaking through Elvina, and drove them back after a desperate affray among the broken ground, sunk roads, and stone walls of the village. In this hot contest the fiftieth regiment led by majors Stanhope and Napier, drew forth loud and warm acclamations from the general, who cried out exultingly, 'Bravo, fiftieth!

well done, my majors!' but the words were scarcely uttered when the former of these heroes fell a corpse, and the latter was wounded and made prisoner. A battalion of the guards was ordered to fill up the void made in the line by these regiments; but the forty-second, whose ammunition was totally expended, mistaking the intentions of the commander-in-chief, and expecting that the guards were coming up to their relief began to retire; while the French, supported by their heavy battery on the height, were advancing to renew the struggle: this mistake was quickly perceived by our commander, who rode up and exclaimed, 'Brave highlanders, remember Egypt: ammunition is coming, and you still have your bayonets:' no other encouragement was necessary; and Elvina again became a scene of mutual slaughter. In the mean time, sir Edward Paget had vigorously checked the enemy's advance, when the centre and left became engaged: a furious action ensued along the line; sir D. Baird was severely wounded; and sir John Moore, watching the result of the contest in Elvina, was struck from his horse by a cannon ball: his shoulder was dreadfully shattered; but he recovered himself, and sat upright, earnestly viewing the struggle going on; and he had the satisfaction to know that his troops were successful before he was carried off the field: his last words to his friend colonel Anderson were, 'You know I have always desired to die in this way. I hope the people of England will be satisfied; and that my country will do me justice.'

Our army now rapidly gained ground: the reserve, overthrowing every thing in the valley, was menacing the great battery, which would have been taken in a gallant assault by the rifles under colonel Beckwith had not a strong corps advanced for its protection; on the left, the village of Palavia Abaxo was carried by some companies of the fourteenth regiment under colonel Nicholls; in the centre, where Elvina was retaken, victory declared for the British; and at night the French retired from all points in disorder to their stronger ground, leaving their opponents masters of

CHAP.
XLIX.1809.
Death of
sir John
Moore.

the field. In consequence of sir John Moore's death, and sir David Baird's wound, the command devolved on sir John Hope, a man capable of undertaking and retrieving even the most desperate affairs: he determined to pursue the original plan of embarkation during the night, which was carried into effect with complete success.

When morning dawned, the French pushed forward some battalions to the heights of St. Lucia, and about noon succeeded in planting a battery there, from which they considerably annoyed our shipping; the masters of several transports were so alarmed, that they cut their cables, and four of the vessels ran aground; but the troops were speedily removed by the boats of our men of war; the stranded ships were burnt; and the whole fleet got safely out of harbor: Hill's brigade then embarked at the citadel; while Beresford, with a rear guard, kept possession of that fortress till the eighteenth; when, the wounded being all on board, his troops likewise embarked; and the whole set sail for England. The French in this battle lost 2000 men; the English scarcely 1000: this, added to casualties during the previous retreat, brought their total loss to about 5000; for which they had obtained the only advantage that could have been contemplated by any rational observer of Spanish affairs. The body of their magnanimous chief, who had thus frustrated the combinations of Napoleon, and defeated his best general, was interred by the officers of his own staff in the citadel of Corunna; where marshal Soult, with due respect for kindred valor, raised a monument to his memory: moreover that justice which Moore hoped from his country has at length been done, both by generous friends³ and noble foes; done too against all efforts of a party, who would have sacrificed his fair fame, for the purpose of screening the incapacity of those to whom he fell a victim.

³ The defence of his campaign by colonel Napier, whose account has been generally followed in the above details, is irresistible.

CHAPTER L.

GEORGE III. (CONTINUED.)—1809.

State of connexion between Great Britain and Spain—King's speech—Addresses, &c.—Debates on the Spanish campaign—Disposition of the ministers and people respecting the war—Militia bill—Soldiers and seamen voted—Charges against the duke of York—Discovery of abuses in East India appointments, places under government, seats in parliament, &c.—Lord Castlereagh's conduct—Mr. Curwen's bill—Charge made by Mr. Madocks against the treasury respecting seats in parliament; by colonel Wardle against the general expenditure of the country—Sir Francis Burdett's motion and plan for parliamentary reform—Supplies—Disclosures respecting the Dutch commissioners—Cause of Spain revives by the Austrian war—Disposition of the French armies, &c.—Evil disposition of the Spanish government—Siege and fall of Saragossa—Affairs of Portugal under sir John Cradock, to the arrival of sir A. Wellesley—The latter lands at Lisbon—His deliberations and plans—Campaign in the north of Portugal, to the expulsion of Soult—Operations of Soult and Ney—Sir A. Wellesley's difficulties, &c.—Those of Victor, and his operations—Soult's movements, &c.—State of the British, French, and Spanish forces—Sir A. Wellesley's advance into Spain—March along the valley of the Tagus—Bad conduct of Cuesta, and the Spanish government, &c.—Operations of Victor—Treachery of the supreme junta—Battle of Talavera—Subsequent operations to the cantonment of the British troops about Badajos—Ulterior military and political proceedings in Spain to the time when sir A. Wellesley retired into Portugal—Napoleon's entry into Vienna—His decree against Rome—Is excommunicated by Pius VII.—Battle of Wagram, and peace of Vienna—State of Europe—British expeditions against Naples and Walcheren—Duel between lord Castlereagh and Mr. Canning—Changes in the ministry—National jubilee—Affairs of the princess of Wales—Domestic incidents, &c.—British relations with America.

THE cause of Spain was so intimately connected with the interests of Great Britain, that the discouraging

State of
Spain.

CHAP.
L.
1809.

aspect of affairs in the peninsula did not for a moment tempt ministers to desist from the contest: they trusted to the resources of the two countries, to the vigor of the British arm, and to an increase of zeal among the patriots; so that in the speech delivered to parliament in the king's name, it was declared, that his majesty had renewed, amid the difficulties and misfortunes of the Spaniards, those engagements which he had voluntarily contracted at the beginning of their struggle.

Addresses were voted without a division; but several members declared their opinion, that the conduct of ministers showed their utter incapacity to discharge the duties required of them: a motion of censure however by lord Henry Petty, for that misconduct and neglect which had been mainly instrumental to the convention of Cintra, was made without effect. Neither was the Spanish campaign passed over without strong animadversions; for Mr. Ponsonby, taking an ample review of the principal incidents connected with it, drew thence a conclusion very unfavorable to the capacity and judgment of our cabinet; though he failed in his motion for an investigation of their conduct. 'With so many opportunities and resources at command, they had instituted no proper inquiry into the state of the peninsula, the bent of the public mind, the inclinations of the higher ranks, the views of the middle classes, and the probability that effective resistance would be made to a vigorous and mighty foe: extraordinary indecision and unnecessary delays had injured the cause which the king pretended to support: several Spanish armies were routed before the British troops were prepared to act; and when they became engaged in the contest, they were in danger of total ruin.' Messrs. Tierney and Wyndham also severely satirised the ignorance and errors of ministers, whom they pronounced incapable of conducting the new contest with wisdom and effect. In resisting the motion for inquiry, lord Castlereagh descended to the miserable arts of a parliamentary tactician, by ridiculing the inconsistency of its mover, who at one and

the same moment, recommended celerity, and advised deliberation; who blamed a slowness of action, yet vindicated a retreat from the contest. Mr. Canning, on the contrary, when the subject was afterwards brought before the house by lord Temple, candidly acknowledged the difficulties under which ministers labored, from their total ignorance of the Spanish territories; and fairly admitted that 'respecting the situation of Spain they had every thing to learn:' their deficiency in knowledge however was soon supplied, and their errors were remedied, by the genius of one man, who may be numbered among those signal instruments raised up by Providence to support and direct a nation, when the very framework of its constitution is dissolved. Due credit however must be given to the British government, for its determination to persevere, and draw out the utmost resources of this country, in opposing the oppressor of the continent: in fact, it was for the question of British or French supremacy that the contest was now carried on in the peninsula. The people themselves saw this; and notwithstanding partial disturbances and local insurrections, where distress pressed heavily on particular portions of the community, they cheerfully supported ministers throughout the war; uninfluenced by the clamor and predictions of a party in the state, who, from the very first failures in Spain, became determined prophets of ill; who pronounced, at the commencement of each campaign, that it must end in disaster; and when that closed in victory, anticipated ruin in the next.

As one of the means necessary to support the present contest, lord Castlereagh introduced a militia bill; the chief features of which was the facility offered to ministers, of increasing the disposable force of the country, by bounties granted to such as transferred their services to the regular army, as well as to those who filled up vacancies left in the ranks which the others had quitted: the measure, notwithstanding a strong opposition, and an absurd outcry against the

CHAP. danger of so large a military force as was projected,
L. ultimately passed.

1809.

Every motion of censure on the proceedings of the war having been lost, and the thanks of parliament presented in the most flattering manner to Wellesley and Ferguson for their gallant conduct at the battle of Vimiero, the commons voted 130,000 seamen, including 31,400 royal marines, for the present year; the number of men employed in the various services of the army being about 400,000.

Charges
against the
duke of
York.

On the twenty-seventh of January a serious accusation was exhibited against the duke of York, who, as commander-in-chief, had obtained great and deserved credit for the many improvements which he had introduced into the organisation and discipline of our troops. His official regularity and easiness of access had rendered him generally popular with the officers; though some disappointed and discontented spirits were found, who charged him, through the instrumentality of the press, with permitting himself to be swayed by very corrupt and profligate motives in the disposal of commissions. His known state of embarrassment, and his moral aberrations, co-operated with these charges, in bringing his official character into suspicion; until at length, public rumor, with its hundred tongues, proclaimed on all sides, that military patronage was made the subject of an infamous traffic with the paramours of the commander: a discarded mistress, named Mary Ann Clarke, to whom he had violated his promise of a paltry annuity, made disclosures that gave a color to the accusation; and her confidant, a colonel of militia and member of parliament, at length brought the matter before the house of commons, where his *ex parte* statement was so startling and circumstantial, that the friends of his royal highness could not resist a motion for inquiry, to be conducted by a committee of the whole house.

In the course of this investigation, which occupied public attention seven weeks, the charges seemed to derive strength from numerous letters brought forward,

which revealed secrets that may be regarded as curious monuments of the state of manners in high life at the commencement of the present century. That Mrs. Clarke took advantage of her connexion with the duke to establish an agency for the sale both of military and ecclesiastical preferment, there was complete evidence; but the few instances in which any benefit was obtained by the dupes of this artful woman, rendered it very doubtful if the royal lover had any knowledge of her practices: fascinated indeed by her charms of person, but more especially by that vivacity of manner and sprightliness of wit¹ which made a strong impression even on the house itself, he had yielded in a few instances to requests of which she knew how to take ample advantage; but from every imputation on his honor, as participating in the shameful traffic, he was absolved by all sober and right-judging men, even when popular indignation was at its height. Several motions were made on the subject; but that of colonel Wardle, for an address to his majesty, praying that he would be graciously pleased to remove the duke of York from the command of our army, on account of the corrupt practices which had been proved against him, was rejected by 364 votes against 123: an amendment, however, moved by Mr. Bankes, acquitting his royal highness of personal corruption or criminal connivance, but expressing an opinion that abuses had been proved, which could scarcely have existed without exciting suspicion in the mind of the commander-in-chief, and suggesting the propriety of his removal from office, was negatived by a majority of only ninety-five. It was afterwards decided, by a majority of 241, that as certain charges had been brought forward, a distinct opinion regarding them should be given; and a resolution proposed by sir T. Turton, declaring that grounds for charging the duke with a knowledge of the corrupt practices of Mrs. Clarke rested on good evidence, was thrown out by 334 votes against 135:

¹ Being subsequently engaged as a witness in the court of King's Bench, she was asked by the learned judge,—‘under whose protection she then was?’ when she immediately replied,—‘under that of your lordship.’

CHAP.
L.
1809.

a less unequal division however took place on Mr. Perceval's proposition, declaratory of innocence; for which a majority of eighty-two votes only could be obtained.

This, in so numerous an assembly, did not satisfy the accused party; especially as the minority against him contained a large portion of independent members: he accordingly took the opportunity of resigning his official situation, after his innocence had been declared, and when it could not be said that he relinquished it from any apprehension respecting the result of inquiry: the duke's retreat however did not allay the indignation of a party in the house, so far as to prevent another attempt to fix a stigma on his character; and Mr. Bathurst strongly urged a resolution, which he thought would have an impressive and admonitory effect; acknowledging the general merit and beneficial regulations of the late commander-in-chief, while regret was expressed for that unbecoming and immoral connexion, from which an interference detrimental to the service, as well as other disgraceful and criminal transactions, had resulted.

Lord Althorp, however, satisfied with the termination of the inquiry, exhorted the house to declare that it was not then necessary to proceed further; meaning that the investigation should be resumed in the event of the duke's re-appointment, which was easily foreseen by every one acquainted with court policy: Mr. Perceval supported this amendment, after all reference to time had been excluded; and it was carried by a majority of 123. General sir David Dundas was appointed successor to his royal highness; and one of the early consequences of this investigation to the country, was the enactment of a law, declaring the brokerage of offices in the army, church, or state to be a crime highly penal: a threat of Mrs. Clarke to publish the remainder of the duke's letters in her possession, produced a negotiation between herself and lord Moira, at the express instance of the prince of Wales; when those documents, which, like many already made public, were said to contain very impru-

dent disclosures regarding members of the royal family, were ultimately given up for a valuable consideration.

CHAP.
I.

1809.
Parlia-
mentary
corruption.

During the foregoing investigation, discovery was made of a systematic traffic in appointments under the East India company, and in subordinate places under government, which led to a committee of inquiry into the abuse of East India patronage; when it was determined, that a considerable number of writers and cadets, who had obtained their situations by corrupt practices, should be recalled: but at this period the whole system of government was rife with abuses; and any search into one department was almost sure to disclose their existence in another: thus an opportunity now occurred of attacking lord Castlereagh, which was eagerly seized; and lord Archibald Hamilton submitted a strong motion of censure on the noble secretary's conduct, for having, when president of the board of control, placed a writership in the hands of lord Clancarty, for the purpose of enabling him to exchange it for a seat in parliament: this discovery was made by the committee for inquiring into the abuse of East India patronage; and though the negotiation did not succeed, owing to the unwillingness of the agent for obtaining the seat, to name his employer; yet lord Castlereagh, from his own examination, appeared to have entered on this disgraceful business, without hesitation or scruple, with a man whose profession was that of an advertising place-broker. A long debate ensued, in which Mr. Canning, who a few days before had opposed a motion for inquiry into abuses solely because they were not specified, now assisted this great delinquent to escape, by pleading a mere technicality in his favor: the job was not completed *in fact*, though as a negotiation it was *perfect*: he admitted the evidence as sufficient to establish corrupt intention; but since it could not be said that the noble lord had conducted himself with contumacious contempt; since he had confessed his error with as much humility as was consistent with his own honor and the dignity of the house; he trusted that, all

CHAP.
L.

1809.

circumstances being weighed, it might not be thought necessary to adopt criminatory resolutions.

But though a majority of the house brought the secretary safe out of the perils of this crisis, recent exposures enabled Mr. Curwen to carry a bill for better securing the purity and independence of parliament, by preventing the obtaining of seats through corrupt practices; and also for the more effectual prevention of bribery: the speakers on all sides admitted the facts stated by its mover; and, with few exceptions, seemed to be convinced of the necessity of such a measure: but in passing through the house, its most important provisions were sadly frittered away; so that many friends of reform refused to vote for its passing into a law, lest it should injure the cause by obstructing the way towards efficient relief. While this bill was pending, Mr. Madocks brought forward a charge against the treasury of corrupt conduct in the purchase of parliamentary seats, which were filled by members attached to the interest of ministers, and bound to support all their measures: the specific instance which he adduced, was that of Mr. Quentin Dick, who had purchased a seat for the borough of Cashel, through the agency of the honorable Henry Wellesley, acting in behalf of the treasury. It appeared that on occasion of the charges recently brought forward against the duke of York, when Mr. Dick had determined to vote according to the dictates of his conscience, lord Castlereagh intimated to that gentleman the necessity of his voting with government, or resigning his seat; and that Mr. Dick, sooner than act contrary to principle, made choice of the latter alternative, and vacated his seat accordingly: Mr. Madocks also alleged that Mr. Perceval was privy to this transaction; and he engaged to prove this charge by witnesses at the bar, if the house would permit him to call them: nothing however was farther from the intention of the house at that time, than to grant such an inquiry. Mr. Canning expressly declared, that he opposed the honorable gentleman's motion, because it

was acknowledged to be the first step toward parliamentary reform; and against such encroachments of faction the house had now to make a determined stand: after violently impugning the motives of those who supported the charge, he observed; 'it was the character and influence of that house which achieved all our blessings; and out of it grew the vital principle which distinguished this from every country; operating as the perennial source of good, unknown to other nations: was then the source from which such blessings flowed, to be stigmatised as a sink of corruption; an object of alarm and disgust?'

Mr. Hutchinson protested against the doctrines advanced by the last speaker; 'which posterity would undoubtedly reprobate, when it should hear that a house of commons was found so debased, as to acknowledge the existence of corruption in its formation, and justify its existence.' Here the speaker was interrupted by loud cries of 'Withdraw! withdraw!' and a violent uproar ensued: when order was restored, the honorable member observed, 'it was at least consistent in gentlemen opposed to him, to drown, if possible, all discussion; convinced, as they must be, that such conduct as they had pursued this night, shrunk not only from inquiry and argument, but from the touchstone of common integrity.' Mr. Madocks made a brief reply, defending the consistency of his public life, and the purity of his motives: in the course of it, he observed, 'that a right honorable gentleman (Mr. Wyndham) had confessed, that corruption existed from the top to the bottom of the state; he felt sorry to agree with him on this point; but it did indeed so exist: its universality and ubiquity were frightful, and reminded him of Virgil's portraiture of Fame;—

Ingrediturque solo, et caput inter nubila condit.'

The question being loudly called for, the motion for a committee of inquiry was negatived by 310 votes against 85.

Colonel Wardle, not satisfied with exposing the errors of individuals of high station, commenced, on

CHAP.

L.

1809.

Motion for
reform.

the nineteenth of June, a vehement attack on the extravagance exhibited in the expenditure of this country, which had been augmented since last year by the enormous sum of £7,400,000: but in taking a review of our military, civil, and colonial establishments, he did justice neither to himself nor to his cause, by the mode in which he brought forward his statements: these were taken up on cursory or partial views of the subject; and though the general impression was, that a great saving might be effected, few thought that colonel Wardle had pointed out proper methods of retrenchment. Mr. Huskisson, having endeavored, with true parliamentary tact, to blind the house by vilifying the character of his opponent, entered into a labored defence of the existing system, in which he certainly succeeded in showing that most of colonel Wardle's statements were incorrect or unfounded: it would have had a better appearance however, if he had directly admitted the practicability of reducing our expenditure, even though he had not employed his own accurate and extensive knowledge in developing any plan to effect it: his conduct on this occasion was part of a system injudiciously pursued by administrations in general: while their opponents contend that there are many things wrong and injurious to the public interests, they on the other hand obstinately maintain that every thing is correct and beneficial; without perceiving that if they would themselves candidly point out what needs reform, they would not only weaken the power of antagonists, but gain a firmer and more extensive footing in the confidence of the nation. As a general and efficacious remedy for the many and great abuses so freely brought under discussion this session, sir Francis Burdett urged the necessity of parliamentary reform; though his motion went no farther than to pledge the house, at an early period next session, to investigate the state of our national representation: Mr. Perceval however, declaring that 'he saw no reason whatever to enter on the subject of reform at all, could not agree to vote for any such pledge:' he assumed it as

a fact, that the people of England were more united against parliamentary reform than almost any other measure; because they considered it wholly unnecessary: and with regard to the honorable baronet's scheme, he thought it never would produce the expected effects, unless the constitution of the human mind could be first altered, and freed from all its prejudices and passions.

CHAP.
L.
1809.

In order that the reader may judge of the plan thus subjected to the scoffs of that chancellor of the exchequer, and compare it with what has been successfully carried into effect, the following brief analysis is given. Sir Francis divided his scheme into three parts: by the first article it was proposed that all freeholders, householders, and others, who paid direct taxes to the state, the church, or the poor, should possess votes: secondly, that a convenient division of places intitled to send representatives to parliament should be traced out, each division be again subdivided, and each subdivision return one member; the elections being conducted in the several parishes all on the same day: lastly, that the duration of parliaments should be reduced to the period of time most agreeable to the British constitution. Without staying to discuss the merits of this scheme, or the general advantages of parliamentary reform, we may be permitted to observe that the period under consideration was unfit for its introduction: the country was now engaged in a contest for its national existence; and any direct interference with the machinery of government, acknowledged, as it was on all sides, to work well for the prosecution of that contest, would have been the acmé of insanity: indeed, to have taken it to pieces in the face of Napoleon would probably have reduced England to the condition of a French province: and this is the best excuse that can be made for such men as Perceval and Canning; when they so strenuously defended the manifest abuses which had crept into our constitution, as well as that principal cause of them, a monopoly of what were called popular representatives by the aristocratic classes.

CHAP.
L.
1809.

Supplies voted for the present year amounted to about £54,000,000 : among its ways and means, were £19,000,000 proceeding from war taxes; and a loan of £14,600,000, the whole of which had been contracted for at the low interest of four pounds, twelve shillings, and one penny per cent. The fourth report of the committee of public expenditure exhibited disclosures regarding the conduct of commissioners appointed to sell and dispose of Dutch ships detained or brought into British ports, which startled honorable gentlemen even in the existing state of parliamentary representation. It appeared, that the appointment of five commissioners took place in 1795; that their transactions were nearly brought to a close in 1799; and that, as no fixed remuneration had been assigned to them, they charged a commission of five per cent. on the gross proceeds of their sales: not satisfied however with the enormous sum of £132,000 thus produced, they employed the money entrusted to them, in discounting private bills for their own emolument. After an animated discussion, the house resolved that these persons had been guilty of a flagrant violation of public duty; and a sure, though silent step, was thus gained in the cause of parliamentary reform.

The administration of justice in Scotland had for some time past engaged the attention of the peers, particularly of the lords Eldon and Grenville; the latter of whom, on the 6th of June, after the third reading of the Scotch Judicature Bill, moved the first reading of a separate measure for the relief of suitors in the court of session. The chancellor consented to the first reading; but, referring to the difficulty of change among a people so inveterate in their habits, expressed his belief that the introduction of trial by jury into Scotland would not answer the expectation of its promoters. 'Two very learned persons in the north,' said he, 'had lately been discussing its expediency: the first disapproved it, and asked the second by what machinery he would introduce such an alteration? Why—answered the latter—what can be more easy? You have only to pass an act of parliament

for its introduction. My friend, replied the first, in a broad Caledonian accent, an act of parliament might be passed to make us two speak English; but I suspect we should go on speaking Scotch notwithstanding.' Parliament was prorogued on the 21st of June; the king's speech being delivered by the lord chancellor.

CHAP.
L.
1809.

After the battle of Corunna, the cause of Spain seemed wholly lost: her allies were driven out, and her own armies dispersed; her government was bewildered, and her people dismayed: but the hostility of Austria fortunately arrested the conqueror's career; and even Spanish energy revived at the abrupt cessation of his terrific warfare. The court of Vienna was now making incredible exertions; by the magnitude of which it hoped to crush its foe; the plan proposed being to menace both France and Italy with a force of 200,000 men commanded by the archduke Charles, while another army in Galicia was ready to oppose any troops which the czar might send to aid his imperial ally.

Progress
of the
peninsular
campaign.

In the mean time, king Joseph, escorted by about 6000 of his French guards, had re-entered Madrid on the twenty-third of January: but he was a sovereign without revenue; and would also have remained without the semblance of authority, had he not been nominated as the emperor's lieutenant in Spain; which allowed him to move the army at his will: but this delegation of an authority, which was not very prudently exercised, gave much disgust to the French marshals; among whom the same jealous passions, as had ruined the patriotic cause, now began to appear, and soon became sufficiently strong to stop the career of victory. At the period of Bonaparte's departure, his forces in Spain, exclusive of Joseph's French guards, consisted of 324,400 men; of which about 39,000 were cavalry, and 58,000 were in hospitals; while dépôts, garrisons, governments, and prisons absorbed about 25,000: consequently, more than 240,000 were under arms; the great line of communication with France being protected by above 50,000 men, whose positions were strengthened by three fortresses,

CHAP.

L.

1809.

and sixty-four posts of correspondence, each more or less fortified.² The distribution of these troops bore as yet the impress of Napoleon's genius: Madrid was the centre of operations; the different divisions being so distributed, that by a concentric march on that capital, they could crush every insurrectionary movement within the circle of their positions: the great masses being kept on the principal roads diverging from Madrid to the extremities of the peninsula, intercepted all communication between the provinces; and the second corps, under Soult, thrust out, as it were, beyond the circumference, and destined to act independently, was sure to find support, with a good line of retreat, at any point where it might be necessary.

Some faint show of spirit appeared in the Spanish armies of Estremadura and La Mancha during January, when the government was strongly urged by our agents to make an effort to lighten the pressure on the British troops: very little however was effected; and the central junta exhibited their deplorable incapacity by selecting Cuesta for military command: about this time, Florida Blanca, president of that body, died; and was succeeded by the marquis of Astorga, without its character being affected by the change. 'Some fleeting indications of vigor,' says colonel Napier, 'had been produced by imminent danger, during the flight from Aranjuez; but a large remittance of silver from South America, which arrived at Cadiz, absorbed the attention of its members; and the public weal was blotted from their remembrance: even Mr. Frere, ashamed of their base conduct, appeared to acquiesce in the justness of sir John Moore's estimate of the value of Spanish co-operation.'³

Siege of
Saragossa.

In the mean time, the third and fifth corps, under marshals Moncy and Mortier, were occupied in the second siege of Saragossa, whose citizens, sacrificing all personal considerations, prepared an internal system of defence, far more efficacious than that of external fortification; transforming the city itself into

² Napier, vol. ii. p. 9.

³ Ibid. vol. ii. p. 10.

one mighty fortress, and coalescing with the troops in one determined and energetic garrison. The French, encircled by insurrections and straitened for supplies, made but little progress, until marshal Lasnes took the supreme command on the twenty-second of January: then the external defences of Saragossa were soon swept away; but the heroic city stood erect, and defied every effort of her assailants: henceforward the war-cry was heard in her streets, where every house became a fortress, every church and convent a citadel, garrisoned by men resolved to die in its defence. It has been said by an old writer, 'that the Spaniards are lions in their fortresses, and women in the field:' all the accounts of those who served with them in this war bear testimony to their pusillanimous conduct in open battle, while they showed themselves truly lion-hearted at Saragossa and Gerona: nor is this trait confined to the modern inhabitants of the peninsula; their ancestors at Saguntum and Numantia equally exhibited it. Before the middle of February, the spirit of the besiegers was nearly exhausted: 'they had labored and fought,' says colonel Napier, 'without intermission fifty days; they had crumbled the walls with their bullets, burst the convents with their mines, and carried the breaches with their bayonets; fighting above and beneath the surface of the earth, they had spared neither fire nor sword; their bravest men were falling in the obscurity of a subterranean warfare; famine pinched them; and Saragossa was still unconquered!'

CHAP.
L.
1809.

Marshal Lasnes, unshaken by the murmurs of his troops, endeavored to raise their hopes; and, as a pestilence was raging at this period with dreadful violence in the devoted city, he succeeded in restoring their spirit for a general assault. It commenced on the eighteenth; when a mine, containing 3000 pounds of powder, had been sprung under the university with complete effect; while fifty pieces of artillery thundered on the suburb, and effected a breach in the great convent of St. Lazar, the principal point of defence on that side: this important blow being fol-

Its surren-
der to the
French.

CHAP.

L.

1809.

lowed on the nineteenth by a successful attack on the right bank of the Ebro, and the dreadful explosion of a mine, terms of capitulation were demanded by the garrison, but refused, as too favorable, by the besiegers. In the mean time, the artillery kept up its fire; and six mines, under the principal street called the Cosso, being ready for a simultaneous explosion, which would have laid waste one quarter of the city, the hour of surrender at length arrived, and the garrison marched out with those honors of war which they had so nobly earned, to be sent prisoners to France; while the possession of their property and the exercise of their religion were guaranteed to the inhabitants.

In Catalonia, as in other parts of Spain, a withering lethargic vanity, as well as the most pernicious abuses, followed the first burst of popular enthusiasm: even with the assistance of lord Collingwood and his fleet, with arms from Malta and Sicily, and with the regiments that had been released by the convention of Cintra, and conveyed to their own shores in British transports, the Catalonians were unable either to regain or to keep possession of Rosas. 'After the fall of this latter place,' as lord Collingwood observed, 'every thing seemed to go wrong: the Spaniards, though in considerable force, dispersed, as if panic-struck, whenever the enemy appeared: their applications for supplies, indeed, were unlimited; they wanted money, arms, and ammunition; of which no use was made when they got them.' 'In the English papers,' says his lordship, 'I see accounts of successes, and convoys cut off, and waggons destroyed, which are not true: whatever has been done in that way, has been by the boats of our frigates.' In fact, the retention of Tarragona, Tortosa, Valencia, and other important places, as well as the transport of supplies, and assistance to the retreating armies, was wholly due to the co-operation of British ships; while the supreme junta left Spanish fleets to rot at Cadiz and Carthage, though money was advanced by the British government, and the assistance of its seamen offered, to fit them out for sea.

CHAP.
L.
1809.
State of
Portugal.

In Portugal all became anarchy and confusion, through the absence of its British generals; when sir John Cradock,⁴ a very distinguished officer, was sent out as commander-in-chief: after touching at Oporto and leaving some directions with sir Robert Wilson, who had succeeded in organising about 1300 men, under the title of the Lusitanian legion, he arrived at Lisbon in December, 1808; but found the financial affairs dreadfully managed, the regency destitute of all vigor or capacity, taxes unpaid, cash exhausted, and treasury paper at a heavy discount: the government stood in greater fear of domestic insurrection than a return of the French; and though the military forces of the country were estimated at 20,000, yet it appeared from accurate information that only 10,000 stand of serviceable arms remained in the kingdom: moreover the regular troops were dreadfully disorganised, and the militia animated by a spirit of outrage rather than of patriotism. This information he transmitted to the British ministry; who, misled by false information from interested agents, still imagined that both the Spanish and Portuguese armies were numerous and well-appointed; confidently expecting that the latter would be able to take an active part in the peninsula campaign.

The new commander, though surrounded by difficulties, disinterestedly sent a large reinforcement of British troops to the assistance of sir John Moore, while he forwarded to the Portuguese regency a strong representation of the dangerous state of affairs: but he could persuade them to adopt no efficient measures either for arming the people or protecting the frontiers; while the advance of the French in Spain rendered it necessary for the few British troops to fall back: general Stewart therefore was directed to retire on Sacavena, after destroying the bridges of Villa Velha and Abrantes; when the populace of Lisbon, opposing their allies were about to abandon the

⁴ He entered the military service as cornet of the fourth dragoons, December 15, 1777; and after long and meritorious services was raised to the peerage as baron Lowden in 1819; he died, a full general and G.C.B., July 18, 1839.

CHAP.

L.

1809.

country, exhibited signs of the most violent commotion. 'At this gloomy period,' says colonel Napier, 'when ten marches would have brought the French to Lisbon, when a stamp of Napoleon's foot would have extinguished that spark of war which afterwards blazed over the peninsula, sir John Moore made his daring movement on Sahagun; and Portugal, gasping as in mortal agony, was instantly relieved.'

Sir John now took measures for the defence of Lisbon, while sir Robert Wilson, who was established in Almeida, exerted himself in collecting stragglers, enticing Frenchmen to desert their standard, spreading false reports of his numbers in order to create alarm, and practising all the arts of a strenuous and able partisan: but as our reverses in the north-west of Spain became known, the possession of Portugal appeared to the British ministry of less importance, and that of Cadiz obtained an increased value in their eyes: general Sherbrooke therefore was despatched thither in January with 5000 men; sir George Smith, a zealous and clever officer, having been previously sent to remove objections against the reception of an English garrison; while Hookham Frere was directed to open negotiations with the supreme junta for the same purpose. Sir George found the defences of the place in a very dilapidated state, and the city wholly unprovided with regular troops: being ignorant of sir John Moore's forward movement, and naturally calculating on the immediate advance of the French, he wrote to sir John Cradock for assistance; when that officer, little thinking that the supreme junta would be more jealous of their allies than fearful of their enemies, despatched 3000 men, under major-general Mackenzie, which arrived at Cadiz on the fifth of February: but after a series of negotiations, which failed in persuading the junta to admit them into the city, though the populace was anxious for their presence, they were recalled to the defence of Portugal, and arrived at Lisbon on the twelfth of March. This disappointment, like a thousand others, arose from the false position in which our own infatuated minis-

ters had placed themselves, by inundating Spain with arms and money, without asserting any just influence, or insisting on proper terms as the price of their support.

CHAP.
I.
1809.

The zealous efforts made by our commander to secure Cadiz being unsuccessful, while Lisbon, whence his best troops had been withdrawn, was in a very dangerous state, he turned his attention solely to the defence of that capital, and to such a protection of the country as was practicable with his slender forces: in the mean time, the passions of the populace became so furious, that no foreigner could pass the streets in safety; and British troops themselves were exposed to outrageous insults, unrepressed by the Portuguese regency, which was but little better than a Spanish junta. In Oporto, the second city of the kingdom, violence and confusion, owing to the misrule of the bishop and his infamous agents, were at a still greater height; so that, although the bulk of the people continued firm in attachment to their country, a large and powerful party arose, favorable to French interests, and ready to accept a sovereign of that nation, if with him they could obtain national tranquillity and an improved constitution. At this period, too, it appears that the British government had nearly come to a resolution of abandoning Portugal to its fate:⁵ suddenly, however, a change of policy again took place; signs of a better spirit appeared even in its degenerate regency; and the command of all their troops, with the title of marshal, was offered to an English general: this appointment, after it had been refused by sir A. Wellesley, and solicited by the marquis of Hastings, was conferred, through the all-prevailing power of parliamentary interest, on major-general Beresford, to the great discontent of several officers superior to him in rank, and especially of that gallant soldier, general Sherbroke, whose claims appear to have been shamefully passed over. Information of this change was sent to sir John Cradock: orders also were despatched for the recall of general Sherbroke, who had not

⁵ Napier, vol. ii. p. 145.

CHAP.
L.
1809.

reached the harbor of Cadiz when he received them; so that his division, and that of Mackenzie, entered the Tagus together on the twelfth of March; and the fate of Portugal was fixed. Early in the same month marshal Beresford arrived; and, fixing his head-quarters at Thomar, began to collect the Portuguese troops together in masses, appointing British officers to command their regiments, according to the power with which he had been invested: he then commenced that admirable system of reform and military discipline, by which the Portuguese were rendered worthy of standing in the field by the side of British soldiers; while the Spaniards, to the close of the contest, were generally despised both by friends and foes.

During these transactions, Soult, after uniting the first corps with his own, and dispersing the Spanish armies, had been advancing on Portugal: by the middle of March he had taken Chaves, and was marching toward Braga, where the unfortunate Freire, a general who possessed neither talents nor character to command respect, had just been cruelly murdered by the populace. At the former place the humanity of Soult had been conspicuous, allowing the militia that were taken prisoners to return home, and supplying many of the poorer sort with food and clothes; but at Braga, where, after an ill-contested battle, the Portuguese battalions fled in disorder, no quarter was given, on account of the horrid cruelties perpetrated against French prisoners. On the twenty-seventh, the marshal appeared before Oporto, where his opponents were collected in great force, with 200 pieces of artillery in their defences: he had previously written to the bishop, calling on him to calm the effervescence of the people, who had committed here as well as at Braga the most dreadful massacres on their own citizens;⁶ and now, beholding the extended works in his front, and the weakness of their defenders, he renewed his application

⁶ 'The defeat of Braga,' says colonel Napier, 'being known in Oporto, caused a tumult on the twenty-second, in which Louis d'Olivera, a man of high rank, who had been cast into prison, was, with fourteen other persons, haled forth and despatched with many stabs: the bodies were then mutilated, and dragged in triumph through the streets.'

to that abominable priest, to spare him the misery of delivering up this great commercial city to the horrors of an assault. The bishop, however, was neither willing nor able to control the furious populace, who continued firing from their intrenchments during the whole of the negotiation, and would have killed Soult's messenger, if they had not been deceived by a tale, importing that he came to treat for a surrender of the French army: that army, therefore, was prepared for an attack; and the bishop, having brought affairs to an awful crisis, quitted the city, and took his station in a convent beyond the Douro, whence he could view in safety all the horrors of the ensuing day.

CHAP.
L.
1809.

On the twenty-ninth, Soult commenced the assault in three columns; and, having quickly succeeded in taking all the outer defences, broke through the centre of the Portuguese army; one portion of which fled up and another down the Douro: the latter, instigated by terror, plunged into the broad stream, after having shot their general, Lima, for remonstrating against the mad attempt; and nearly the whole perished: the former were actually saved from a similar fate by a corps of the enemy, under general Arnaud, which hemmed them in. The battle then raged furiously within the town, into which two battalions had penetrated: more than 4000 persons of both sexes, young and old, were running in wild affright toward the bridge of the Douro; when a dastardly regiment of their own cavalry, flying from the French, rushed through this helpless crowd at full gallop, 'trampling a bloody pathway to the river.' The survivors still advanced: the boats, that were first occupied, sank beneath the numbers with which they were crowded: the foremost tumbled into the stream as they were pressed from behind, and perished in such numbers, that huge piles of carcasses rose above the surface of the water. Nor was this the worst calamity that fell on the devoted city: when the French troops entered, excited by previous hardships and a sanguinary resistance, they were still farther exasperated by a fire of

Oporto
captured
by the
French.

CHAP.

L

1808.

musketry, which opened on them from the bishop's palace: 'but,' says the author of the *Peninsular War*, 'they became frantic with fury, when, in one of the principal squares, they found a number of their comrades, who had been made prisoners, fastened upright and living; with their eyes burst, their tongues torn out, and their other members mutilated and gashed: those that beheld the sight spared none who fell in their way: it was in vain that Soult and his officers strove to stop the slaughter, and rescued many victims at the risk of their own lives; the frightful scene of rape, pillage, and murder closed not for many hours; and, reckoning those who fell in battle, those who were drowned, and those sacrificed to revenge, it is said that 10,000 Portuguese died on that unhappy day:' in the mean time, the bishop, having seen the overthrow of his ambitious schemes in the north of Portugal, fled to Lisbon, reconciled himself to the regency, and employed his great influence in the same manner as before. While these transactions took place, Sebastiani won the battle of Ciudad Real, defeating the Spanish general Cartoajal with great slaughter, and pursuing his troops up to the Sierra Morena: marshal Victor, also, had intirely routed the forces of Cuesta, in the disastrous battle of Medellin: he was then ordered by the king to support Soult in the invasion of Portugal; but at this time an extraordinary inactivity was perceivable in the French commanders; which, being attributed by the Spaniards to weakness and to the Austrian war, served to keep up a certain degree of spirit in the people, and uphold the authority of the central junta: the remnants of the two defeated armies were united under the obstinate and incapable Cuesta; who, being joined by scattered forces in Andalusia, took post with 25,000 men in the defiles of Monasterio, in order to cover Seville; while general Vinegas proceeded to organise another army in La Mancha. Victor occupied Alcantara, where he was joined by a division brought from the vicinity of Sala-

manca by general Lapisse, whose extreme inactivity had been the principal cause of those dilatory movements which left Soult to his own resources: CHAP.
L.
1809.

The fall of Oporto, however, enabled the duke of Dalmatia to establish a solid base of operations in a prominent station, and to commence a regular system of warfare. Having restored order, and remedied as far as possible the deplorable effects of military fury, he induced the scattered inhabitants to return home by his conciliatory conduct, and the prudence of his civil administration. About this time a scheme was projected to place the crown of Portugal on his head: whether it originated with himself, or with the anti-Braganza party, which was daily increasing, has not yet been determined: at all events, he knew and encouraged the design; but the emperor was vigilant; and a despatch from head quarters informed the troops, that all proceedings, not only of the marshal, but of those around him, were narrowly watched. Soult's services, however, were too important to be thrown away, if his resentment was not too dangerous to be excited; and Napoleon informed him by letter, that 'he remembered nothing but the day of Austerlitz.' The civil duties in which the marshal was now engaged, so much engrossed his attention, as sensibly to affect his military operations; which latter were still farther clogged by the ramifications of a plot to change the French government, existing in the army, discontented and disgusted at the war in which it was now employed.⁸ In such a state of affairs, the unexpected arrival of a renowned and victorious commander created great enthusiasm in Portugal; and when sir A. Wellesley landed, on the twenty-second of April, to assume the direction of our army, the regency immediately nominated him marshal-general of all their forces. This appointment was made with great judgment, and in a proper spirit, by ministers; although by it a general of long standing, and who had obtained their cordial approbation, was superseded in his command. When

⁸ Napier, vol. ii. p. 267, &c.

CHAP.

L.

1809.

complaint was made in parliament that this was an ill reward for sir John Cradock's exertions in collecting the scattered British forces, and thus preventing our abandonment of Lisbon, lord Liverpool very properly objected to parliament touching on the prerogative, and virtually destroying that responsibility which rested on ministers. In fact the interests of the nation and the blood of its defenders, had too often been sacrificed to etiquette or interest: on the present occasion the united voices of the army and the people called loudly for the hero of Vimiero; and the *prestige* of so great a name could not be overlooked. This arrangement, however, was not adopted without a struggle in the cabinet; where the most unobjectionable method possible was adopted to prevent it from wounding the feelings of an excellent officer. Sir John Cradock was appointed to one of the highest posts which lie open to a military man, the governorship of Gibraltar; whereby his previous command was regularly vacated, without impropriety or injustice.

Operations
of sir A.
Wellesley.

Sir Arthur did not long waver between offensive and defensive operations; but knowing that the duke of Dalmatia could not force his way alone to Lisbon, and that general Lapisse, by a false movement, had placed insuperable barriers against any communication between Soult and Victor, he hesitated some time respecting the course proper to be taken. To meet the exigences of the campaign, his resources were, a fine central position; 26,000 courageous, well-disciplined British and German troops; about 16,000 Portuguese regulars, beside two independent corps under colonel Trant and Silveira, in addition to the insurgent force or militia of the country: he had also the fortresses of Almeida, Ciudad Rodrigo, Elvas, Abrantes, Peniche, and Badajos; the British fleet; and the assistance of Cuesta, who commanded 6000 cavalry and 30,000 infantry; the greater part of which was actually in the vicinity of Victor's posts. To fall on that marshal appeared at first view the best policy, because more troops could be brought to bear against him, and his defeat would prove most de-

trimental to the French, as well as advantageous to the Spaniards: but as Soult held in subjection a rich province, whence the chief supply of cattle was obtained, and was forming a French party in the second city of the kingdom; the feelings both of the regency and of the people were interested in his expulsion; while to attack Victor it would be necessary to ensure the co-operation of Cuesta, who was so intractable and ill-disposed toward his English allies, that the time requisite to conciliate him could not be spared. Sir Arthur Wellesley therefore resolved to give his chief attention to Soult: Lisbon however being the pivot of operations against him, the progress of Victor, if he should make any offensive movements against the capital, was to be checked, if it could not be impeded: to effect this, about 10,000 Portuguese troops were directed on Abrantes and Santarem, whither five British battalions and two regiments of cavalry also marched. A body of 2000 men, composed chiefly of the Lusitanian legion, liberated from their position at Castello Branco by the movement of Lapisse across the Tagus, were posted at the bridge of Alcantara, to defend the passage, and, if necessary, to blow up that splendid monument of Trajan's power: the flying bridges at Villa Velha and Abrantes were removed; and the chief command of all the troops, thus disposed along the right bank of the river, was given to general Mackenzie. There was still a danger, that Victor, leaving behind him the fortresses of Elvas and Badajos, might pass the Tagus between Abrantes and Lisbon: but Cuesta had promised to follow in his rear; and reliance was placed on Mackenzie's skill, in not allowing himself to be cut off from the capital: besides, Victor was eighteen marches distant, and accident alone could enable him and Soult to act in concert.

The British generalissimo now directed the march of his combined forces on Coimbra; and these, when concentrated at that place on the fifth of May, amounted to about 25,000 infantry and cavalry, of which 9000 were Portuguese, and 3000 Germans: but so promptly and secretly had this large force been

CHAP. conducted to the Mondego, that the duke of Dalmatia
 L. — was ignorant of its movements; though many of his
 1809. own officers, engaged in the plot above-mentioned,
 were aware of its approach, and actually held several
 conferences, by means of colonel d'Argenton and other
 agents, with sir A. Wellesley; but the latter placed
 too little dependence on this conspiracy to forego his
 military operations in consequence: no long time how-
 ever elapsed before d'Argenton was arrested; and the
 duke, becoming alive to the perils of his situation,
 made every necessary disposition of his troops and
 stores for a retrograde movement into the province of
 Tras os Montes.⁹

It was not long before all the French corps, south
 of the Douro, were driven to the other side of that
 river, after they had destroyed the bridge; but on the
 twelfth of May a passage was effected by some skilful
 manœuvres, and Soult evacuating Oporto, fell back
 with his main force on Amarante. It now became the
 fate of this celebrated commander, by one of those
 sudden turns of fortune so common in war, to fly from
 one British general, as another had so lately fled from
 him: on the very day that Wellesley entered Oporto,
 Loison retreated from Amarante, before Beresford's
 division, without hazarding a blow; thus leaving his
 commander in chief, and two-thirds of the French
 army, exposed to imminent peril: their destruction
 indeed would have been inevitable, if Loison's retreat
 had been known to sir Arthur; who, being uncon-
 scious of the fact, delayed the advance of his forces
 one day at Oporto, in order to bring the rear guard,
 stores, and artillery over the Douro.

News of this unexpected calamity reached Soult at one
 o'clock on the morning of the thirteenth, just as he had
 passed the Souza; and when the whole army, smitten
 with dismay, and sinking under fatigues increased by
 the boisterous state of the weather, called for a capitulation.

⁹ It is to be regretted that the limits of this work will not permit a minute detail of operations in the ensuing campaigns; or of arrangements and combinations previous to great actions, in which perhaps military genius is seen to greater advantage than in those actions themselves, where the soldiers necessarily share in the merits of a successful commander.

lation, he, like the gallant Moore, disdained to surrender; and displayed all the resources of a great commander, being informed by a Spanish pedlar of a path that led over the Sierra de Catalina to Guimaraens, he silenced the murmurings of his troops, destroyed the artillery, abandoned the military chest and baggage, loaded the animals with sick men and musket ammunition, and followed his guide. Though the rain was descending in torrents, and the path such as might be expected in that wild region, the troops made good their passage to Pombeira; and at Guimaraens fell in with Loison's division: during the night, they were joined by Lorge's dragoons; and thus the whole army became concentrated. The energy and sagacity of the French marshal were still farther displayed in his ulterior movements: most generals would have retired by the direct route from Guimaraens to Braga; but Soult, calculating, from the slackness of pursuit after he had passed Vailonga, that the British must be on the road to Braga, and would arrive there before him; or that, at best, he must retreat fighting, and sacrifice the guns and baggage of Loison's and Lorge's corps in the face of an enemy, with admirable firmness of purpose, destroyed them at once: then, leaving the high road, he took again to the mountain paths; and, gaining a day's march in point of time, arrived at Braga on the evening of the fourteenth: there he re-organised his army; and, giving the command of its advanced guard to Loison, who had to fight his way through the native troops, from whose fury no terms of capitulation would have saved him,¹⁰ he took the superintendence of the rear on himself. Wellesley, quitting Braga on the morning of the sixteenth, came up in the afternoon with the enemy's rear guard, which remained at Salamonde, to cover the passage of the army over the bridge, called Ponte Nova, on the Cavado: here a great slaughter took place, when artillery was brought to bear on them; men and horses being crushed together, and driven over the battle-

¹⁰ No one of the French generals had oppressed them so barbarously as Loison, and no one was so hated.

CHAP.
L.

1809.

ments; while the bridge and rocks, and the defile beyond, were strewed with dead bodies: this was the last calamity endured by the retreating army from the British: the tortures and mutilations inflicted on their sick and stragglers by the infuriated peasantry, were most atrocious; and this brought down a dreadful retaliation on defenceless villages and towns in the route, from those bodies of troops which still held together. On the eighteenth, Soult crossed the frontier by Allaritz; and on the nineteenth entered Orense, deprived of guns, stores, ammunition, and baggage; with his men miserably exhausted by fatigue, and with a total loss of 6000 soldiers since he quitted that place eleven weeks before.

At Orense he halted only one day; and on the twenty-first put his troops in motion on Lugo, to succor general Fournier, who with three battalions and a regiment of dragoons was besieged by more than 12,000 Spaniards: on the twenty-third, he entered that place, where he first heard of Napoleon's successes in Austria; and with renewed energy prepared himself for fresh exertions: on the thirtieth he was joined by marshal Ney; and in consequence of an order from the emperor, he sent 1100 men, the skeletons of cavalry regiments, to France; after which, having partially restored the artillery and equipments of the second corps from Corunna and Ferrol, he concerted measures with Ney to destroy Romana. It is not our province to detail their operations, which failed in effect, principally through the jealousy that existed between those two eminent commanders: we must rather return with sir A. Wellesley to his head quarters at Abrantes, where he remained till the latter part of June, kept back by various difficulties from prosecuting his main object, a campaign against marshal Victor. Though he had been reinforced by 5000 men, his army did not exceed 22,000 under arms; for the hospitals were full of sick, the soldiers were nearly barefooted; and all without pay, since the military chest was quite empty: besides, he was constantly subject to a diminution of force; for ministers, still

intent on Cadiz, had authorised Frere to draw a garrison from sir Arthur's army, whenever the junta should permit us to occupy that city.

CHAP.
L.
1809.

The cost of maintaining this army was about £200,000 a month: by the most strenuous exertions £160,000 only had been procured in the two months of May and June; and of this, £13,000 had been obtained as a temporary loan in Oporto: thus, while government was lavishing millions of dollars on the infamous juntas of Spain, our own brave troops were left nearly destitute, and unable to take the field: want of money therefore, sickness, Cuesta's intractable disposition, and several other causes, kept our army in a state of inactivity. Neither had Victor himself been able to make any progress, while the British were chasing Soult from the north of Portugal: the emperor's original plan had been in various instances departed from; and all thoughts of attacking Portugal vanished, when Napoleon was obliged, on account of the threatening posture of affairs in Germany, to recall the imperial guards from Vittoria, and to diminish his Spanish armies by more than 40,000 men. These circumstances rendered Joseph timid; and he thought it more important to preserve Madrid than to conquer Lisbon: Sebastiani therefore was forbidden to make any forward movement; and the duke of Belluno, whose army was wasted by an intermittent fever, took a position at Torremocha, a central point between Truxillo, Merida, and Alcantara: his cavalry posts watched every passage of the Tagus and Guadiana; while his communications with Madrid were protected by 1200 troops detached for that purpose by the king.

In the mean time, the presence of the British at Castello Branco excited the Spanish insurgents in the valley of the Tagus, who communicated secretly with those of the Sierra de Guadalupe on the left side of that river: hence Victor, alarmed for his bridge at Almaraz, sent a division thither on the twenty-second of May, and remained quiet himself; having neither assisted Soult, nor crushed Cuesta, nor taken Badajos

CHAP.
L.

1809.

or Seville: meanwhile; the Spaniards were daily regaining confidence; and sir Arthur Wellesley, after beating Soult, had full leisure to arrange his combinations with their armies on the Tagus and in the south. Much valuable time however was lost with Cuesta, who wished to direct the whole campaign; but sir Arthur, though he anxiously sought to conciliate that obstinate old man, could not yield so vital a point; and thus the opportunity was lost of a rapid march to Almaraz, and cutting off Victor at Torremocha. The French marshal, seeing the practicability of this manœuvre, determined to retire across the Tagus; which movement he effected on the nineteenth of June, without any molestation from Cuesta, and took post at Plasencia; having, by a *ruse de guerre*, induced colonel Mayne to blow up the bridge of Alcantara, in order that his flank might not be subject to attack. Meanwhile, Beresford returned to the defence of the northern provinces of Portugal, against the indefatigable Soult; who, hearing of Wellesley's arrival on the Tagus, ceased his pursuit of Romana, and marched to Zamora, whither his brother had conducted 3000 or 4000 stragglers. Here also he requested the king to send artillery and stores necessary to equip the second corps, which required some rest, after its horrible sufferings during an incessant warfare of eight months: Ney at the same time removed his division to Astorga; and thus Galicia was completely freed from the presence of French troops. Beresford, having collected together all the Portuguese regulars at his disposal, placed them in position about Almeida: the duke del Parque was at Ciudad Rodrigo; and thither a part of Romana's forces also had repaired: so that no less than 25,000 native troops were assembled round those two fortresses, opposed to Soult's intended movement along the frontier line of Portugal. In the mean time, Suchet had intirely dissipated the army of Blake in Arragon; by which means he rendered the fifth corps, under Mortier, available for offensive operations: thus, on the first of July, there were, beside the divisions of Kellerman and Bonnet, three complete *corps d'armée*,

consisting of 6000 cavalry and 50,000 infantry, collected between Astorga, Zamora, and Valladolid: the inroad on Portugal had failed, and the loss of Galicia followed; but Napoleon's admirable system of invasion still remained unbroken.¹¹ The whole number of French forces at this time in the peninsula, under arms, amounted to about 175,000 infantry, and 33,000 cavalry; those under Victor in the valley of the Tagus, and at Madrid with the king, amounting to near 50,000 foot and 9000 horse; those under the supreme command of Soult, in Old Castile, reaching nearly the same number of infantry, and above 5000 cavalry:¹² yet the situation of Spain was an ameliorated one; the materials of resistance were again collected into large masses; and the hopes of the people revived; since they attributed the inactivity of the French to weakness and fear, rather than to the real causes,—the pressure of the Austrian war, the jealousy of the marshals, and the unmilitary character of the king. The Spanish forces were about 20,000 in Arragon and Valencia; 25,000 in the north-western provinces, under Vorster, Ballasteros, and the duke del Parque: the Andalusian armies consisted of about 70,000; of which 38,000, including 7000 cavalry, were under Cuesta in Estremadura; while 23,000 infantry and 2500 cavalry were in the Morena, near St. Elena and Carolina: these troops however were far from being serviceable in proportion to their numbers; for they consisted mostly of new and ill-trained levies; with commanders who had lost nothing of their presumption, learned nothing of the art of war, and were as contentious with each other as ever. Cuesta, hating the junta, was equally hated in return by that body, who had placed Vinegas at the head of the army: about Carolina, as a counterpoise against him, in their own interest: all the others were infected with extreme jealousy and a factious spirit, which descended even to the inferior officers: but every operation was paralysed by the junta. 'At the very period,' says colonel Napier, 'when the marquis Romana and the

CHAP.
L.
1809.

¹¹ Napier, vol. ii. p. 329.

¹² Ibid. p. 332.

CHAP.
L.

1809.

Gallician insurgents were urgently soliciting a few arms and £5000 from sir John Cradock, the junta possessed many millions of money; and their magazines in Cadiz were bursting with the continually increasing quantity of stores sent from England, which were left to rot as they arrived, though from every quarter of the country not yet subdued the demand for these things was incessant: we shall soon see how their British allies, advancing into the country to fight their battles, were left equally destitute by these wretched governors.

Sir A. Wellesley's advance into Spain.

The time however was now arrived for a blow to be struck in Spain, while the energies of the people appeared to be resuscitated; and large armies, collected together during the absence of Napoleon, seemed only to require a great military genius to lead them on to victory: that genius was at hand; yet even he was misled, like his eminent and unfortunate predecessor, by false information, vain boasting, and faithless promises: urged by the importunities of the Spanish government and generals, and feeling that if Victor were not quickly disabled, the British army, menaced on both sides by powerful foes, must retire to some defensive position and become an object of contempt, sir Arthur Wellesley determined to advance. Three lines of operation were open to him: by the first, he would have crossed the Tagus, joined Cuesta, and made Elvas and Badajos the base of his movements; but this might have endangered Beresford's army: by the second, he would have taken Almeida and Ciudad Rodrigo as the centre of operations, advancing by Salamanca, while Cuesta and Vinegas occupied the attention of Victor; but this might have led to the ruin of Cuesta's force, and to the loss of Seville or Lisbon: these routes therefore being rejected, he adopted the third, and determined to advance on Plasencia and Almaraz, endeavor to form a junction with Cuesta, and then advance on Madrid; toward which point Vinegas might proceed by way of La Mancha. The native armies under these two generals consisted of 38,000 and 25,000 men respectively; being

the best equipped and most efficient of all that had yet taken the field: the English force in Portugal amounted to 20,000 men on the frontier, and 8000 at Lisbon; so that 90,000 regular troops might thus be brought to bear on 50,000, which was the number of French protecting Madrid: besides, there were many bands of Spanish guerillas in the mountains; and sir Robert Wilson's legion was about 1000 strong.

The mountainous ridge which separates the valley of the Tagus from Castile and Leon being impracticable for artillery, except at the passes of Baños and Perales, it was supposed that the 20,000 men under Beresford and the duke del Parque would be able to block those entrances; and that Romana, moving through the Tras os Montes, might join them, and thus form an efficient protection to the flank of our army in its advance to Madrid. But it remained for sir A. Wellesley to acquire a practical knowledge of Spanish skill, activity, and faith, which was not lost on him in his future campaigns: besides, the means of information were so defective, that the arrival of the sixth French corps at Astorga, and of the fifth at Valladolid, was unknown to him; as also was the efficient state in which the second had been placed by its indefatigable commander. 'Thus,' says colonel Napier, 'instead of fifteen or twenty thousand harassed French troops, without artillery, there were seventy thousand fighting men behind the mountains:' fearful odds! against which nothing but the most consummate skill, sagacity, and valor could have contended with success.

On the twenty-seventh of June, the British army, consisting of about 21,000 men, of which 3000 were cavalry, with thirty pieces of artillery, broke up from the camp of Abrantes, and on the tenth of July was collected at Plasencia, whence the duke of Belluno, who had previously taken post there, had been recalled by the king to Talavera: this movement on the side of the French was adopted in consequence of false information spread respecting Vinegas, who was said to be advancing with considerable reinforcements on Madrid: under such circumstances Joseph himself marched as

CHAP. far as the Jabalon river into La Mancha, in the hope
L. of meeting that general; though he left Victor with
1809. only 14,000 men at Talavera, exposed to attack by
Cuesta with nearly 40,000: but there was little danger
from a Spanish commander, especially from Cuesta.

Knowing that two French corps were beyond the mountains on his left, sir A. Wellesley took great precautions to protect his flank on that side, renewing his instructions to Beresford for watching the enemy's motions, and looking carefully to the defence of the Puerto Perales: but the important pass of Baños remained still to be guarded; and for this he demanded assistance from Cuesta, who at first was unwilling to afford any at all: at length, he consented to forward two battalions from his own army, and two others from the town of Bejar; while the duke del Parque agreed to send a detachment to the pass of Perales: futile, however, as this aid would have proved against the overwhelming and unexpected force of Soult, it was rendered absolutely ridiculous by Cuesta, who sent two weak battalions of 300 men each, with only twenty rounds of ammunition!

At Plasencia, after a discussion of two days, the British and Spanish commanders agreed to march with their respective armies, on the eighteenth, against marshal Victor; while Vinegas, advancing at the same time through La Mancha, should make for Fuente Dueñas on the Upper Tagus, in order to draw thither Sebastiani, with the fourth corps; or if that general refused to move, should cross the Tagus, and march on the capital from the S.E., while sir Robert Wilson menaced it from the opposite quarter. At this time, however, the British troops were almost destitute of supplies; but sir Arthur, misled by the information of Frere, who described the inhabitants of Estremadura as viewing the war in the light of a crusade, and as actuated by the enthusiasm of such a cause, had pushed forward his army, and now found that none of its wants were attended to by government, or generals, or people: justly, therefore, alarmed for the safety of his forces, he wrote both to Mr. Frere and to general

O'Donoghue, the chief of Cuesta's staff, representing his present distress, and intimating his resolution not to proceed farther than the Alberche, which falls into the Tagus a little beyond Talavera, unless his wants were immediately supplied: faithful, however, to his engagements with Cuesta, he prepared for an advance to that river.

CHAP.
L.
1809.

On the eighteenth our army crossed the Tietar, and on the twentieth reached Oropesa, where it halted during the twenty-first; on which day Cuesta, who had moved from Almaraz by Naval Moral and Arzobispo, passed Oropesa, and concentrated all his forces at Velada, with the exception of a small detachment, which marched on the left bank of the Tagus, to threaten the enemy by the bridge of Talavera. On the twenty-first, the duke of Belluno, aware of these movements of the allies, recalled his stragglers, altered his line of retreat from the Madrid and the Toledo road, removed his *parc* to Cevolla, and placed two divisions of infantry behind the Alberche. On the twenty-second, the allies moved in two columns to drive in the French posts at Talavera; when Cuesta, first coming up with the enemy's rear-guard, suffered a shameful repulse from 2000 cavalry under Latour Maubourg: the French then retreated without loss, supported by a small body of infantry, behind the Alberche; while 6000 Spanish horsemen looked calmly on, and could not be persuaded to make even a partial charge against the enemy: Victor then concentrated his forces behind the Alberche, where he rested during the twenty-second and twenty-third: but no satisfactory information could be obtained by sir A. Wellesley respecting the strength or situation of his opponents, until some English officers crossed the Tagus, and surveyed the French position from the mountains. A general outline of attack was formed for next morning; but the details were unsettled; and when sir Arthur came to arrange these with Cuesta, the old man was gone to bed: the British troops were drawn out under arms by sunrise; but Cuesta's staff were not roused

Ill conduct
of Cuesta.

CHAP.

L.

1809.

from slumber till seven o'clock, and then he objected to fight because it happened to be Sunday; during the course of the day, however, it was reported that the French had withdrawn their guns, with an intention to retreat: then Cuesta became willing to attack, and proposed a survey of the enemy's position in company with the British general; when, to sir Arthur's infinite surprise, he came in a Spanish coach drawn by six horses; and, as the roughness of the ground obliged him to descend from that vehicle, he threw himself down at the foot of a tree, and in a few minutes was seen fast asleep.¹⁸ Though always ready to censure and thwart every proposal of his colleague, he now consented to fall on the enemy, and the troops were put in motion early on the twenty-fourth; but Victor, who held a secret correspondence with the Spanish staff, was informed of their situation, and retired during the night to Torrijos: there he was joined hourly by reinforcements during the inactivity of Vinegas; while the king was collecting his forces between Toledo and Talavera, and Soult was gathering together a formidable mass behind the mountains of Bejar. The British general was ignorant of this latter danger, or he would probably have retired to Plasencia, where his communications with Beresford and Lisbon would have been secure; especially since his contracts for provisions had been disregarded no less than his representations to Cuesta and the government: but he little anticipated the vile treachery which he now experienced from the supreme junta; who, after agreeing to the plan on which the commanders were acting, secretly ordered Vinegas not to fulfil his part of it; conceiving that it would be a cunning stroke of policy to save from the hazard of defeat that force on which their own power mainly depended. 'Thus,' says colonel Napier, 'the welfare of millions was made the sport of men, who yet were never tired of praising themselves, and have not failed to find admirers elsewhere.' At this time Soult was at Salamanca with

¹⁸ Napier, vol. ii. p. 369.

50,000 men, not more than four days' march from Plasencia.¹⁴

CHAP.
L.

1809.

The resolution of sir A. Wellesley to halt at Talavera made no impression on Cuesta: a French corps had retreated before him; and in the fulness of his arrogant vanity, he crossed the Alberche in pursuit, 'as if he was chasing a deer: he soon, however, discovered that he had been hunting a tiger;' for on the twenty-sixth, while he was meditating a retreat, the French suddenly passing the Guadarama, beat back his cavalry, and routed a large corps of infantry at Alcabon, with a total loss of 4000 men to the Spaniards; their whole army being saved only by the admirable precaution of sir A. Wellesley, who interposed a British division, under general Sherbrooke, between them and their pursuers: he then anxiously entreated Cuesta to withdraw his troops to Talavera; but the obstinacy of the old general resisted all persuasion: he passed the night, in a sulky mood, on the spot to which he had retreated; nor did he yield next day to the renewed solicitations of the British general, until the French cavalry came in sight: then, turning with sullen pride to his staff, he observed that 'he had first made the Englishman go down on his knees.'¹⁵ After this, he retired to Talavera, and left the disposition of both armies to one who was as much his superior in temper as in talent.

General Mackenzie's division, and a brigade of light horse, being left on the Alberche to cover a retrograde movement, the allied troops were placed in position to await the attack of the enemy, now united under king Joseph, the duke of Belluno, and general Sebastiani. The city of Talavera, which is built close up to the river, being taken as a fixed point, the Spaniards were placed in two lines, extending thence to the left, till they rested on a high mound,

¹⁴ On the thirtieth of June, Soult, when at Zamora, received a despatch from the emperor, dated near Ratisbon, conferring on him the supreme command of the second, fifth, and sixth corps, with orders to concentrate them, and act decisively against the English. 'Wellesley,' said Napoleon, 'will probably advance, by the Tagus, against Madrid: in that case, pass the mountains, fall on his flank and rear, and crush him.'—Napier, vol. ii. p. 374.

¹⁵ Napier, vol. ii. p. 382.

CHAP.
L.
1809.

defended by a strong redoubt, behind which a brigade of British light cavalry was placed: all this front was covered by a convent, ditches, mud walls, breast-works, and felled trees: in the rear was placed the Spanish cavalry; and their position, which was scarcely visible, appeared to be impregnable. To the left of the mound stood brigadier general Campbell's division, in two lines; next to which was that under general Sherbrooke in one line, because Mackenzie's was still on the Alberche: still farther to the left stood the German legion, resting on the foot of a steep hill, the key of the whole position, which was occupied by troops under general Hill, and subsequently by those under colonel Donkin. The intire line, when thoroughly displayed, was two miles in length; its extreme left being bounded by a valley, and the front covered by a water-course: the main body of cavalry was formed in column behind the left. The British and Germans under arms amounted to 19,000 men, with thirty guns; the Spaniards mustering about 34,000, with seventy guns: the enemy came on with eighty guns and about 50,000 men; all being well-disciplined veteran troops, accustomed to act together.

After driving in the British outposts from a spot called the Casa de Salinas, where Sir A. Wellesley had a narrow escape from capture, the French columns followed briskly, and charged so impetuously that the British brigades got into confusion: they lost 400 men, and were with difficulty saved from destruction by the exertions of the forty-fifth regiment, and some companies of the sixtieth, who let the retreating soldiers pass through their ranks, and bravely checked the pursuers. Victor, animated by this success, brought up fresh troops; then, rapidly crossing the plain, and seizing on a hill in front of colonel Donkin's position, opened a heavy fire: meanwhile, a large body of cavalry rode boldly up to the right, and fired with pistols on the Spaniards, to make them show their line; when those wretched troops gave a general discharge of musketry; and immediately, as if lost to all sense of shame, 10,000

infantry, with the artillery, throwing away their arms, fled to the rear in confusion: the panic was now spreading, and Cuesta himself was thinking of retreat; when sir A. Wellesley, whom neither the errors of his allies nor the ingenuity of his enemies could baffle, flanked the main road with some British squadrons, and saved the position: the fugitives, however, with their commissaries, paymasters, and all other such attendants on an army, ran off in terror, spreading the most disastrous reports, as far as Oropesa: at length, Cuesta, recovering from his first alarm, despatched a strong body of cavalry, which brought back some thousands of the infantry and a part of the artillery during the night; but the Spanish force was diminished by 6000 men, and the great redoubt in the centre was silent for want of guns. As the steep and rugged hill on the left of the British army was the grand point to gain, Victor, observing its crest unoccupied, attacked it vigorously about sunset; and though colonel Donkin's brigade made a brave resistance, his force was too weak to defend every part: many of the French, therefore, turning his left, gained possession of the summit: general Hill, advancing to his assistance, was wounded, and narrowly escaped being taken prisoner; but breaking from the grasp of the grenadier who had caught the bridle of his horse, he galloped down; and meeting in his descent with the twenty-ninth regiment, he led them up instantly to the charge, and regained the lost ground: a more general attack was then made; and the flashes of musketry, in the darkness which had come on, exhibited the combatants at the short distance of about twenty yards from each other: for a time, the issue was doubtful; but soon the well-known shout of the British was heard, rising above the din of war; the enemy was driven back at all points, leaving 1000 dead or wounded on the field, and causing a loss of 800 to their antagonists.

Each army was now illuminated by its bivouac fires; but the Spaniards, owing to some alarm, kept up a desultory discharge of musketry and cannon through the night, by which several of our officers and men

Battle of
Talavera.

CHAP.
L.

1809.

were unfortunately slain. Victor, who had acquired a knowledge of the Spanish position, reported his failure to the king; but proposed that another attempt should be made at day-break so earnestly, that Joseph, in opposition to the sounder advice of marshal Jourdan, consented to the measure: accordingly, by sun-rise on the twenty-eighth, the assault was renewed by general Ruffin's division, supported by that of Vilatte, and preceded by a burst of artillery which swept away whole ranks, and was followed by a regular discharge of musketry: then battalion after battalion charged; and if any succeeded for a time, they were again repulsed, until the whole mass gradually gave way; at length, unable to sustain the opposing torrent, and having lost 1500 men in forty minutes, it broke away in utter disorder, and regained its former position under cover of a powerful artillery.

The British commander, now perceiving his error in not having prolonged his line across the valley, hastened to rectify it by bringing up the cavalry in great force behind his left, and placing general Bassecour's division of infantry, which he had obtained from Cuesta, on a mountain at the other side: the position being thus secured, marshal Jourdan strongly advised Joseph not to hazard another attack, but to take post behind the Alberche, and wait the effect of Soult's operations against the English rear: Victor however opposed this prudent counsel, engaging to carry the hill on the British left, provided the fourth corps would at the same time attack the right and centre: the king, though he coincided with Jourdan in opinion, and though the confidence of his troops was much shaken by the rough treatment they had received, was yet so fearful of what the duke of Belluno might report of opportunities lost to Napoleon; and so afraid lest Vinegas, who was now threatening Madrid, might deprive him of the capital; that he determined to bring on a general action.

While the French commanders thus held council, the armies took some rest; but the British were suffering the extremity of hunger, having for some time

had only a few ounces of wheat per man daily, and that in the grain: the weather was intensely hot; and the troops on both sides descended, without fear or suspicion, and amicably quenched their thirst together at the little brook which divided the positions: but at one o'clock the sullen roll of the drum was heard through the French line, and the soldiers were seen gathering round their eagles: soon afterwards, the king's guards, the reserve, and the fourth corps, were descried in full march to join the first; while the ground on the French right, even to the valley, was covered with dark and lowering masses: the signal for battle was now given; and eighty pieces of artillery sent an iron tempest before the light troops, which, coming on rapidly, were closely followed by compact columns. Sir Arthur was on the summit of the hill, viewing the dispositions which he had made with so much skill and sagacity, when the fourth corps made an impetuous attack on general Campbell's division: assisted however by that of Mackenzie and two Spanish battalions, it met the charge with true British intrepidity, driving back the foe with great carnage and a loss of twenty guns: regular discharges of our artillery and musketry then made dreadful havoc in the dense masses, and victory was secured in this quarter.

In the mean time, Vilatte's division, preceded by the grenadiers, and supported by two regiments of light cavalry, advanced up the great valley on the left, while Ruffin was seen in full march toward the mountain beyond it: sir A. Wellesley instantly ordered Anson's brigade of cavalry, composed of the twenty-third light dragoons, and the first German hussars, to charge the head of these columns: the regiments advanced at full speed; but in a few minutes they arrived at a deep cleft in the ground: then the French, throwing themselves into squares, opened their fire; when the Germans, under colonel Arentschild, a brave and experienced officer, promptly reined up at the brink; but the more impetuous English regiment, in its hot blood, dashed down the chasm where it was less precipitous, though a large portion of horses and men

CHAP.
L.
1809.

rolled over each other in the descent. As the survivors clambered up the opposite bank, colonel Seymour their commander being severely wounded, they were rallied by major Frederic Ponsonby; and passing through Vilatte's columns, which opened a fire on each side, fell with inexpressible violence on a brigade of chasseurs in the rear: while thus engaged, they were attacked by the Polish lancers, and a regiment of Westphalian light horse; the contest then became too unequal; the twenty-third was utterly broken by these fresh troops; and the remnant fled to Bassecour's division, leaving behind them 207 officers and men.

During this time, the hill, the key of the whole line, was again vehemently attacked by Lapisse's division, aided by a large train of artillery, and a heavy battery, which played most destructively on our ranks: under cover of this, the French battalions advanced close to general Sherbrooke's division, as if determined to come up to the point of the bayonet; but they were received with such a steady fire, that they soon gave way; when the brigade of guards, under the excitement of the moment, quitted the line with inconsiderate ardor, to follow up their success: the enemy's supporting columns and dragoons then closed up; the retreating columns turned again; the heavy batteries played on the advancing line; and the guards drew back; while the German legion, which was next them in position, was also thrown into confusion. The centre of the British was now absolutely broken, and fortune seemed adverse, when sir A. Wellesley, whose penetrating eye this rash movement of the guards had not escaped, ordered the forty-fifth regiment down from the hill on the left, though a fierce conflict was going on at that point; while sir S. Cotton's light cavalry advanced to support them. This movement gained the day: the guards and Germans instantly rallied; the British artillery played with extraordinary effect on the enemy's flanks; and Lapisse being mortally wounded, his division gave way; and the whole army finally retired to the position whence it had descended to the attack. The British troops, ex-

hausted by hunger more than fatigue, were unable to pursue their advantage; and the Spaniards were incapable of any orderly movement: about six o'clock, therefore, the conflict wholly ceased, each party holding the same ground which it had in the morning: but the battle was scarcely over, when a sad accident occurred: the dry grass and shrubs became ignited; and a volume of flame rolling in terrific course over a large portion of the field, miserably scorched the soldiers who lay extended on its blood-stained turf.

The result of this hard-fought battle to the English might be called a repulse of the enemy, rather than a victory: they lost near 5500 officers and men in killed, wounded, or missing; while their antagonists left behind them about 7000, with seventeen guns: two generals fell on each side: the Spaniards returned above 1200 men, as killed and wounded; but the correctness of their report was much doubted. On the twenty-ninth, the French, quitting their position, retired behind the Alberche; and on the same day, general Robert Craufurd arrived from Lisbon, with three regiments, which took charge of our outposts: during their march, they had encountered crowds of runaway Spaniards, who propagated disastrous reports respecting the army; but when they came up, they found that army victorious over their enemies, though sinking beneath the excruciating tortures of famine; while sufficient corn was concealed at Talavera to supply the whole for a month. The Spaniards beheld all this distress with perfect apathy; and left an impression of contempt and hatred on the minds of their British allies, which was not effaced during the war: in the mean time, the savage Cuesta, whose own indolence and ignorance had banished discipline from his army, was occupied in decimating his runaways; and Spanish troops, together with the inhabitants, were traversing the field of battle, to beat out the brains of wounded Frenchmen; thus leaving an implacable desire of revenge in the enemy, of which their unfortunate country reaped the bitter fruits.

Sir A. Wellesley had marched up the valley of the

CHAP.

L.

1809.

Tagus, misled, like sir John Moore, by false reports of patriotic enthusiasm; expecting to be joined by an effective army under Cuesta; supposing also that the Spaniards in the north had sufficient force to keep Soult employed; and concluding that three French corps under three marshals never could have been assembled at Salamanca, unknown to the governor of Ciudad Rodrigo, or the junta of Castile: yet on all these points he was mistaken; and after his hard-earned victory at Talavera, almost every advantage remained with the French. King Joseph, on the first of August, occupied a strong central position at Illescas, between the army of Vinegas and the capital; Victor remained in force behind the Alberche; and Soult, with troops more numerous than those of the king and Victor united, having burst through the Col de Baños, occupied Plasencia in rear of the British. At this moment, the fate of the peninsula hung on a very slender thread: communications having taken place between Joseph and the duke of Dalmatia, above 90,000 men were put in motion, just as Wellesley became acquainted with the real danger of his situation. Cuesta, having abandoned the sick in hospital at Talavera, now proposed the most absurd schemes; but sir Arthur made no farther concession to his humors; sternly declaring his intention to move instantly, and leave the Spanish general to act according to his own fancy: he accordingly retired with his whole force to the other side of the Tagus, over the bridge of Arzobispo; having first safely conveyed across it a considerable portion of his wounded men and stores: the sick at Talavera were confidently left, and recommended to the care of marshal Victor, who nobly fulfilled the duty thus imposed on him by his antagonist. From Arzobispo the army inclined toward Deleytoza; and general Craufurd's brigade was directed to effect its retreat by a forced march to the bridge of Almaraz, which he fortunately accomplished: Soult, in the mean time, thinking that he had enclosed the British, as it were, in a net, came on with full confidence of victory; but found only Cuesta's army

engaged in the passage of the bridge of Arzobispo. That wretched old man seemed at this moment devoted to destruction; for Victor's division, having crossed the Tagus at Talavera, was also coming down to attack him in flank: but leaving a large force to defend the passage at Arzobispo, he moved towards our position; and when Soult defeated his rear guard, the others were saved, because Ney was unable to discover a ford below Almaraz, and king Joseph had recalled Victor's corps, to support the fourth, opposed to Vinegas. On the eleventh of August, the British army was at Jaraicejo, in a position which enabled them to guard the ford of Almaraz; while the Spaniards occupied an impregnable post to their right on the heights of the Meza d'Ibor: at this time, Cuesta resigned his command, and was succeeded by general Eguia: no change of commanders however could change the disposition or character of the Spaniards.

CHAP.
L.
1809.

The duke of Dalmatia, being thus thwarted in his plans, conceived that sir A. Wellesley would endeavor to repass the Tagus at Alcantara, in order to form a junction with Beresford, and a corps of 5000 men under general Catlin Craufurd, which was on the frontiers of Portugal: but marshal Ney, considering a hasty invasion of that kingdom to be a very hazardous experiment, absolutely refused to concur in it; especially as the insurgent Spaniards were again in possession of Salamanca; which city now presented itself as the proper object of attack: his reasoning was approved by the king; who was confirmed in this opinion by despatches lately received from Napoleon, prohibiting any farther offensive operations in Spain until the reinforcements should arrive, which his recent victory at Wagram enabled him to send.

Two days after the battle of Talavera, the marquis Wellesley superseded Mr. Hookham Frere as envoy extraordinary in Spain: had he arrived at an earlier period, the result might have been very different; for his talents and authority with the junta would probably have procured for his brother the chief command of Spanish as well as British troops. In the mean

CHAP. time, the army of Vinegas, consisting of 2500 cavalry,
 L. 22,000 infantry, and forty pieces of artillery, the best
 1809. provided and best officered native force in Spain, was
 utterly routed with immense loss at Almonacid, by
 generals Sebastiani and Dessolles, under king Joseph
 in person: the remnant took shelter in the Sierra
 Morena; and his majesty returned triumphantly to
 the capital, having stationed the first and fourth corps
 at Toledo and Aranjuez.

The Anglo-Spanish army however still retained its
 positions at Jaraicejo and Deleytoza; while sir Arthur
 Wellesley, knowing that Ney had retired toward Sala-
 manca, and miscalculating the French forces, entertained
 hopes of again acting on the offensive; especially as
 marshal Beresford had reached Moraleja with about
 14,000 Portuguese; and 5000 British troops were
 stationed on the frontiers. If Soult, therefore, invaded
 Portugal, the English general intended to follow him;
 but if the French kept their present position, he meant
 to recross the Tagus, and, in conjunction with the
 Portuguese, to fall on their right at Plasencia. He
 was taking measures to execute his design, when the
 bad faith and conduct of the Spanish government and
 its generals again obliged him to provide solely for the
 safety of his own men: the governing party in Spain
 seemed actually to have concerted a plan for *starving*
 their allies; and this at length proceeded so far, that
 'the Spanish cavalry intercepted the provisions and
 forage destined for the English army; and fired on its
 foragers, as if they had been enemies.'¹⁶ Before the
 middle of August, nearly half our horses became un-
 serviceable; and British ammunition was given to the
 Spaniards, because its carts were required to convey our
 sick. When the Portuguese troops passed the frontiers,
 they met with similar treatment; nay, the cabildo of
 Ciudad Rodrigo seized on the very magazines which
 sir Arthur Wellesley had established there; taking their
 contents as security for a pretended debt; and refusing
 to allow a single ration to the famished soldiers.

Such was the state of affairs, when the supreme

¹⁶ See Napier, vol. ii. p. 432, and his authorities quoted in the Appendix.

junta gave to sir Arthur the rank of captain-general; pressing him to renew offensive operations, but without making the slightest change in their own system: the British commander however saw that Spain was no longer a place for his army, and informed the junta that he should retire immediately into Portugal: they received this intelligence with consternation, and tried every possible method to alter his resolution; but all in vain, for his views were no longer thwarted by diplomatic agency. On the twentieth of August therefore he commenced his retreat, pursued by every species of calumny which disappointed ambition could invent; and when this did not disturb his equanimity, the supreme junta, against whom the tide of popular discontent now began to set, made the most flattering offers to engage him on their side; but their vile political intrigues could not shake his determination: refusing their offers, as he had despised their libels, he continued his march; and, in the beginning of September, distributed his troops in Badajos, Elvas, and other places on the Guadiana, inflamed with indignation at the shameful treatment they had experienced from their allies: the brigades already in Portugal were then brought up; the lost ammunition and stores being replaced from magazines existing in that country: but so weak and extenuated were the frames of our unfortunate soldiers from fatigue and bad nourishment, that when a fever, common to the country, broke out among them, above 5000 perished by its ravages. The manner in which this eventful campaign had been conducted by the British army was duly appreciated in England: the thanks of parliament were voted to its officers and men, while their distinguished commander was created viscount Wellington of Talavera.

CHAP.
L.

1809.

Sir A. Wel-
lesley re-
tires into
Portugal.

It now remains only to notice briefly some operations in other parts of the peninsula. While Galicia and the Asturias were in a state of comparative tranquillity, the guerilla system of the Partidas sprang up in Biscay and Navarre, but more especially in Arragon and Catalonia, where many discomfited and dis-

Progress of
Spanish
armies.

CHAP.

L.

1809.

persed soldiers flocked to the standards of notorious leaders: nor was it long before these roving bands were augmented both by French and English deserters; but, being inured to systematic cruelty, they became almost as terrible to their own countrymen as to the stragglers of the French army. Suchet had nearly reduced Arragon and Valencia to submission, when he was called off to quell a formidable insurrection in Navarre: in this he succeeded, and eventually captured Mina, one of the most celebrated guerilla chieftains, but was unable to suppress the system: Espoz y Mina took the place of his nephew, and continued, with extraordinary success, harassing and disturbing the French lines of communication, to the very end of the war. In Catalonia, the heroic city of Gerona still held out against the efforts of Verdier, aided by the operations of marshal St. Cyr; but the incapacity of Blake, commanding the Catalonian army, rendered the noble conduct of its garrison unavailing: the strong places in its vicinity, Montjuic and Palamos, had fallen to the French arms; and though the gallant Garcia Conde had introduced a convoy into Gerona itself, yet Blake neglected every opportunity of raising the siege. At length, St. Cyr retired to Perpignan; marshal Augereau undertook the conduct of the war in this quarter; and, at the end of October, the strong fortress of Hostalrich, with a garrison of 2000 men, and abundance of stores and provisions, was carried by storm almost in sight of Blake's army. As a counterpoise to this loss, admiral Martin, on the twenty-third of October, intercepted, between Toulon and Barcelona, a French squadron of three ships of the line, two frigates, and sixteen large store-ships: during the chase, several of the latter were burned by the enemy; others were driven ashore in different places; when two of the line-of-battle ships and a frigate were burnt by their crews; and the store-ships, which took refuge in the bay of Rosas, under protection of the batteries, were wholly destroyed by the boats of captain Holloway's squadron, notwithstanding a desperate resistance, which cost the British seventy

men in killed and wounded. Meanwhile, the distress of Gerona increased; sickness and famine were within its crumbling walls; all its outward defences were in possession of the enemy; and its noble-minded governor, Alvarez, was seized with a delirious fever: a council of war then assembled; and, after six months of open trenches, the garrison capitulated on the tenth of December. 'Its fall,' says colonel Napier, with great truth, 'was a reproach both to the Spanish and English cabinets: the latter, having agents in Catalonia, and such a man as lord Collingwood in the Mediterranean to refer to, were yet so ignorant of what was essential to the success of the war, as to let Gerona struggle for six months; when half the troops employed by sir John Stuart to alarm Naples, if they had been carried to the coast of Catalonia and landed at Palamos, would have raised the siege.'

CHAP.
L.
1809.

Soon after sir Arthur Wellesley had withdrawn his troops to the frontiers of Portugal, popular discontent against the supreme junta increased to such a degree, that a conspiracy was formed to seize its members, and transport them to Manilla. The displeasure which the marquis Wellesley had openly manifested against this body on account of their scandalous proceedings, induced the conspirators to make him acquainted with their designs, in the hope of obtaining his sanction and assistance: that nobleman however, being an accredited envoy to the existing government, considered himself bound in honor to apprise it of its danger, without mentioning the names of any engaged in the plot. The junta, in great alarm, now proposed a scheme of government, adapted to obtain a momentary popularity, but totally unconnected with any large or liberal views of policy: their project was foiled by Romana, who drew up a strong charge against his colleagues, and proposed the appointment of a regency comprising five persons, who were not members of the junta; this council to be assisted by a newly chosen junta, composed also of five members and a procurator-general; one to be a South American; and the whole to represent the Cortes, until the meeting of

CHAP.

L.

1809.

that assembly, which he thought should be as soon as possible, could take place: to evade this proposal, the supreme junta announced that the national Cortes should be convoked on the first of January, 1810, and assemble for business on the first of March following: having thus endeavored to allay public indignation, they resolved to re-commence offensive operations, by the success of which they fondly hoped to establish their own popularity and power. Out of the remnants of their broken and dispersed armies they soon raised a body of 50,000 infantry and 10,000 cavalry, which the enormous accumulation of English stores and money at Seville and Cadiz enabled them to equip: these troops were placed under the command of Eguia, who advanced with them a short distance into La Mancha; but when the enemy appeared in force, he retired into the Sierra Morena, and took post at Carolina. In the mean time, the duke del Parque, being reinforced by 800 cavalry, sent by Bassecour, and the Gallician divisions of 13,000 men under Mendizabel and Carrera, while Ballasteros was hastening to join him with 8000 more, became eager to act against the sixth French corps; for which purpose he earnestly requested the co-operation of the Portuguese army: his proposal being referred to lord Wellington, that great commander, in a clear and comprehensive report, gave the most powerful and convincing reasons against the adoption of such a plan: his arguments however had no effect on the Spanish general or junta; who, in return, demanded a definite answer as to the time when the Portuguese army would be in a condition to act with Spaniards in the Spanish territory. His lordship's reply was in the following terms;—‘when there shall be a Spanish army with which the Portuguese can co-operate on some defined plan, a plan which all parties will have the means, and will engage to carry into execution, as far as any person can engage to execute a military operation;—also when means shall be pointed out and fixed for the subsistence of the Portuguese troops while they remain in Spain; so that

they may not starve, and be obliged to retire for want of food, as was the case when they were lately in that country.' Here ended this negotiation: the duke del Parque commenced operations by himself; and, being attacked by Marchand, before his junction with Ballasteros, he actually discomfited that general at Tamames, taking a French eagle, one cannon, and several hundred prisoners: being then joined by Ballasteros, he pursued his foes to the vicinity of Salamanca; but retired before Kellerman, who had brought up strong reinforcements from Valladolid, and finally took refuge in Bejar.

While these events occurred in Castile, the supreme junta were commencing an enterprise of unparalleled temerity. Having displaced Eguia, and discovered in general Areizaga a commander as presumptuous as they could expect, and as imbecile as their enemies could wish, they placed him at the head of the grand army of La Mancha, and ordered him to drive the French out of Madrid: this however it was easier to order than to effect. Areizaga commenced a reckless march, ignorant of French movements or numbers, and blind to all that was passing around him, till his vanguard received a severe check from Sebastiani at Dos Barrios: then it was, that, beginning to feel some misgiving, he communicated his doubts to the supreme junta, who eagerly demanded the assistance of the British army, and sent orders to the dukes del Parque and Albuquerque to bring up their forces: the latter immediately put 10,000 men in motion; but though lord Wellington, who had proved the military qualities both of the French and Spaniards, absolutely refused to co-operate in this rash enterprise, the junta without hesitation declared to their generals and to the public, that he was actually on his march. The consequences of such measures might easily have been foreseen: during the delay at Dos Barrios the French forces were concentrated from every quarter: and what but defeat could be expected from the encounter of such generals as Areizaga and Albuquerque with Soult, Victor, and Sebastiani? After a foretaste of

CHAP.
I.
1809.

disaster in a combat of cavalry, the great battle of Ocaña took place, in which the French, with a trifling loss of 1700 killed and wounded, scattered an army of more than 50,000 men like chaff before the wind. Five thousand Spaniards were left on the field of battle; and ere the shades of night descended, all the baggage, with 3000 horses and mules, forty-five pieces of artillery, 30,000 muskets, and 26,000 prisoners, were in the hands of the conquerors!

Soon afterwards, the army of the duke del Parque, consisting of 30,000 men, which had the audacity to threaten the sixth corps, was dispersed by Kellerman at Alba de Tormes; and though about 20,000 of them were rallied by their commander in the mountains behind Tamames, they were without artillery; and very few had preserved their muskets: such also was their distress for provisions, that when the British arrived on the northern frontier two months afterwards, the peasantry still spoke with horror of the sufferings of that famished soldiery: they died in vast numbers; yet the mass neither dispersed nor murmured; for the patience of the Spaniards under sufferings equalled their misconduct on the field of battle. The result of these rash enterprises fully justified lord Wellington's advice to the Spanish government; but that body still continued to receive his counsels with insolent contempt: having therefore, at an enormous sacrifice of life, saved Andalusia from invasion, and having kept his position on the Guadiana longer than his own judgment would have dictated; induced as he was to remain by the earnest entreaty of his brother, who had not yet fully penetrated into the character of the supreme junta; he marched from Badajos, released himself for ever from the machinations of Spanish councils, and laid in Portugal the foundation of those grand measures which finally carried him triumphant through the peninsula.

Campaign
of Napo-
leon in
Germany.

While this contest was going on in Spain, where the most pusillanimous armies in the world, though continually defeated and dispersed, still sprang up again, like the heads of a hydra, to baffle and disap-

point the best of Napoleon's generals, he himself was advancing from the field of Essling to the gates of Vienna; into which city he entered about a month after the Austrians had commenced hostilities. He now sent forth from his imperial camp a decree, revoking the grant of territory made to the pope by his 'august predecessor Charlemagne,' and annexing Rome to the French empire; the sovereign pontiff being allowed to remain there as bishop, with a revenue of 2,000,000 francs. Here was a grand step taken toward the civilisation of the world and the happiness of mankind: but it was taken alas! with no such intent; and was connected with too many schemes of injustice and ambition to be lasting: Pius VII. however, determining to employ the only arms that were in his power, opposed this decree of aggression by a bull of excommunication; and it is said that Napoleon received the intelligence with a considerable degree of anxiety: as his continental system was contrary to nature, so his ecclesiastical system was contrary to conscience: he felt this; but it was not his habit to recede, especially after he had entered on a wrong course; orders therefore were issued, under which the holy father was seized in his palace, and transported, with circumstances of great hardship and indignity, over Mount Cenis, to Savona: there, refusing all compliance with the tyrant's demands, he lived three years, partly on a prison allowance, and partly on alms; until in June, 1812, he was dragged a prisoner to Fontainebleau: but he who bent all, was unable to bend this aged prelate, or to restore harmony between the church and state. In the mean time, the Danube alone separated those immense armies, which were contending, the one for supremacy, the other for independence: and the day at Aspern proved that he, who deemed himself invincible, might be conquered. All Europe was now excited by anxious expectation; but the victory was not improved: repulsed and cooped up in the island of Lobau, Napoleon was allowed time to escape, and recover his advantage: he crossed the river a second time, and fought the deadly battle of

CHAP.
L.
1809.
Peace of
Vienna.

Wagram, from which resulted the peace of Vienna. This deprived the Austrian monarchy of three millions and a half of its subjects, in the Illyrian, Carinthian, Hungarian, and Croatian provinces ceded to France—Salzburg, Berchtolsgaden, and other districts to Bavaria—all western Galicia to the king of Saxony—and a large district in eastern Galicia to the emperor of Russia, who condescended to enrich himself at the expense of his old and impoverished ally: obliged also to receive unconditionally the continental system, Austria promised to break off all relations with England, and to acknowledge the changes that might be made in Spain, Portugal, and Italy: hard conditions, after so honorable a struggle! Cut off wholly from the sea, deprived of its Alpine bulwarks, with distracted finances, and open boundaries surrounded by armed states on the north, south, and west, little hope seemed left to the house of Hapsburg; on which the last indignity was now passed, when a daughter of that ancient dynasty was demanded by its conqueror, to grace his triumph, and to share his throne: with the loss of Austrian independence, that of Europe seemed tottering to its fall; while a future catastrophe for the Ottoman empire lay in the peace of Vienna, which brought France into immediate contact with its north-eastern provinces. The incapacity and rashness of Gustavus IV. reduced Sweden also to the brink of ruin: but that monarch was deposed in March, and the government committed to his uncle, the duke of Sudermania, under the title of Charles XIII.; Christian Augustus, prince of Holstein Augustenburg, being adopted as his eventual successor: negotiations were then opened with Russia; by which Sweden gave to her antagonist the principality of Finland, the isles of Aland, and a promise of adherence to the continental system. At the close of this year, the whole continent, with the exception of the peninsula, was in a state of tranquillity: but how fallacious was that calm! By wars and pacifications, by the subversion and erection of thrones, and by royal or imperial alliances, a system of universal sovereignty in the dynasty of Napoleon

was sought to be established: but experience soon proved how vain were such hopes; for in Great Britain there existed a power destined to destroy them, and to show that universal dominion by land cannot exist independently of that by sea. Though the whole line of coast, from the Pyrenees to the Elbe, guarded by revenue officers and *gendarmes* of France, might aggravate the difficulties of interdicted commerce, they could not annihilate it: at the same time, not a French ship of war could show itself with impunity out of harbor; as appeared by the late action on the coast of Catalonia: nay, even in harbor they were not safe; as was proved by the gallant achievement of lord Cochrane, who, with a small flotilla, accompanied by some fire-ships, attacked the Brest fleet, which had run into Basque roads, at the mouth of the Charente, under the protection of strong batteries: he there drove on shore and destroyed three line-of-battle ships, and one of fifty-six guns; the rest moving higher up the river, where it was impracticable to molest them. With respect to islands and colonies, few years were comparatively more disastrous to France: in the West Indies, the colony of Cayenne, under the government of Victor Hugues, fell an easy conquest to a combined attack by British and Portuguese troops: the important island of Martinique was invaded in a very inclement season, when Mount Sourrier and some other posts being stormed, Fort Bourbon was laid completely open, and its garrison capitulated after a fierce bombardment: a serious sacrifice of life attended this success; but when the city of Domingo was besieged by general Carmichael, and recovered for our Spanish allies, no such loss occurred. On the coast of Africa, Senegal and Goree fell before our arms; and in the Mediterranean, the important isles of Zante, Cephalonia, Ithaca, and Cerigo, which, with the rest of the Ionian republic, had been ceded to France at the peace of Presburg, now acknowledged the British flag.

But more especially in the peninsula, the power of Great Britain was beginning to develop itself, as a principal antagonist to the usurpation of France. We

CHAP.
L.

1809.

had in that country a warrior equal to contend in the field against Napoleon himself: hitherto, indeed, he had been betrayed by the corrupt governments of Spain and Portugal, and ill supported by his own; but the time was now approaching, when the British cabinet, freed from the incapacity of Perceval and Castlereagh, and the intrigues of Canning, seconded him with a better zeal; until, catching a portion of his spirit, they placed the whole resources of the nation at his disposal, and enabled him to tread the soil of France as a conqueror. The circumstances that led to this change in affairs are now to be detailed.

While the contest was hot between France and Austria, the British cabinet prepared two expeditions; the first against Naples, under sir John Stuart, to please the miserable court of Palermo; the second against Antwerp, for the purpose of destroying Napoleon's maritime preparations in the Scheldt; though each had for a secondary object, to create a diversion in favor of the Austrian emperor. Both completely failed: Murat had ample notice of the Sicilian expedition, during four months' preparation; and defeated every attempt to obtain a footing, or excite insurrection in his kingdom; though bands of ruffians and desperadoes were thrown on the coast, where, under the pretext of war, they committed such atrocities, that the British military and naval commanders thought it necessary to disavow them.

Expedition
to the
Scheldt.

The armament destined for the Scheldt, was, like the other, so long in preparation, that it came too late: some days before it sailed, news arrived of the Austrian defeat at Wagram; yet, instead of altering its destination, and sending it to the peninsula, which might thus have been liberated at once from French intrusion, the British cabinet, more conversant with parliamentary intrigues than with military or political combinations, obstinately persisted in their first design.

This expedition, the largest and most complete that ever left the shores of Britain, originated with lord Castlereagh; and by it he has condemned his memory

to perpetual remembrance, though unaccompanied with that species of renown, which he anticipated from a design, surpassing, in his own imagination, the most brilliant conceptions of Napoleon.

CHAP.
L.
1809.

In July, a British fleet assembled at the Downs, consisting of thirty-nine sail of the line, thirty-six frigates, and a proportional accompaniment of gun-boats, bomb-vessels, and smaller craft: the troops which it was intended to convoy amounted nearly to 40,000; making, together with seamen and marines, a sum total of 100,000 men. The imposing magnificence of this mighty force drew myriads of spectators to witness its departure; among whom was the projector of the expedition, with a large assemblage of ministers and their friends: but while joy and hope filled all hearts, the angel of death was hovering over an ill-fated multitude, doomed to perish, not on the glorious battle-field, but by the consuming breath of a noisome pestilence. Incapacity marked the whole proceeding: it was intended to be a *secret* expedition; but even in April, its destination was disclosed to the enemy, who took all possible means to fortify Flushing, and secure their naval arsenals on the Scheldt. So little was the nature of the climate known, that no supply of proper medicines was ever thought of: but, worst of all! the chief military command was given to a man, whose name was proverbial for sloth and inactivity: this was lord Chatham, brother to William Pitt! he was in very embarrassed circumstances, which a lucrative command might improve; and he was a favorite with the court, which cruelly urged a sacrifice of national interests, national glory, and national blood, for his private emolument. On the twenty-eighth and twenty-ninth of July, this mighty armament, the chief naval command of which was given to admiral sir Richard Strachan, got under weigh, and stood for the coast of Holland; its original intention being to proceed up the West Scheldt: with that view, two preparatory operations were planned;—to destroy the batteries on the isle of Cadsand;—and, in a descent on South Beveland, to storm or seize

CHAP.
L.

1809.

those in that quarter, which might obstruct the progress of the fleet; but the violence of the wind drove the whole armament toward the East Scheldt: it was then proposed to disembark near Domburg, on the isle of Walcheren; and when this was prevented by a heavy swell, it became expedient to take shelter in the road of Veer, where a succession of heavy gales for many days rendered the former scheme impossible. The fleet being skilfully conducted through a narrow and difficult passage, our troops effected a landing near a fort, which was quickly abandoned by its garrison.

Capture of
Flushing.

As the chief town of the island was readily given up to its invaders, the reduction of Flushing was the only object which retarded the progress of our fleet: but at that place the enemy had concentrated his forces; it was accordingly attacked, though the siege was carried on some days before the wind would permit a naval blockade to be formed; and lord Chatham then seemed disposed to leave the conduct of the assault to his second in command, and proceed to Batz, where sir John Hope was stationed with his division, anxiously waiting for assistance: after some delay, however, a flotilla proceeded by the Sloe passage into the West Scheldt; and on the thirteenth of August, the batteries being completed, and the frigates and smaller vessels having taken the stations assigned to them, the bombardment commenced: the place suffered dreadfully from shells and Congreve rockets; and on the following day, the ships of the line, after a cannonade of several hours, succeeded in silencing the forts: next morning, general Monnet demanded a suspension of hostilities for a few hours; at the expiration of which, he surrendered the town, with a garrison of 6000 men.

Although the expedition was thus far successful; yet the want of skill and vigor in conducting the attack, and the confusion that existed in the various departments, soon became subjects of free animadversion: it was also observed, that the island of Cadsand, the only place whence the enemy could receive sup-

plies or reinforcements, was left unoccupied; and as the naval force had not intercepted the communication, advantage had been taken of this omission to transport 3000 men thence to Walcheren: in the mean time, a large force was collected at Antwerp, composed of national guards of the Belgic provinces, and those nearest to them in France: the forts on the Scheldt were well manned; Bernadotte arrived, and put Antwerp into a state of complete defence; while preparations were made for carrying the fleet still higher up the river, in case the British should succeed in forcing a passage.

CHAP.
L.
1809.

Lord Chatham should now have immediately returned, or the ministers should have recalled him; for what benefit could arise from the possession of Walcheren? but the evil star of both prevailed; and in the vain hope of supporting the interest of the Austrian emperor, who had not yet concluded the treaty of Vienna, the island was retained. Our troops were soon attacked with a dreadful endemic fever of the country; and trifling as had been our losses from fire and sword, it is well known that this was the most fatal contest in which a British army ever engaged: nearly one-half was taken off by disease, while the greater part of the remainder carried its effects with them to the grave: the dead were buried by night (a precaution hitherto adopted only in the plague), in order to conceal the frightful spectacle. Lord Chatham brought back his tarnished name, and part of his force, to England on the fourteenth of September: in one month from that time the treaty of Vienna was signed; but a long time was still suffered to elapse, even after all cause for remaining in this pestilential climate was removed; since Mr. Perceval ignorantly contended that the malady invariably ceased in November. At length, when this information was found to be false, the few surviving troops able to work, were employed in demolishing the defences and basin of Flushing; which done, the feeble remnant of our magnificent army re-embarked in sight of an enemy, who, being aware that the ravages of disease would render attack

Dreadful
mortality
among the
British
troops.

CHAP.
L.1809.
Dissentions
of minis-
ters.

unnecessary, had taken no means to expel the invaders.¹⁷

The ill success of this and other measures produced not only dissatisfaction in the nation, but discord among the ministers themselves; by whom a dissolution of the cabinet had been for some time expected, on account of the failing health of the duke of Portland. On the twenty-first of September, a hostile meeting took place between lord Castlereagh and Mr. Canning; when, after two shots had been exchanged, and the latter had received his antagonist's ball in his right thigh, an end was put to the murderous and disgraceful scene. This duel was preceded by a letter, in which his lordship accused the foreign secretary of clandestinely endeavoring to procure his removal from office, on the ground of incapacity, although he continued to sit with him in the same cabinet: many statements and counterstatements of the case were put forth; but the facts will scarcely bear out the charge of duplicity brought by the noble lord against his colleague. It appears, that Mr. Canning, convinced of lord Castlereagh's unfitness for the duties of a war minister, tendered to the duke of Portland in the beginning of April during the Easter recess, the alternative of his lordship's removal to another department, or his own resignation: this his grace made known to lord Camden, a relative and friend of lord Castlereagh; who acceded to the propriety of a change in his lordship's official duties, provided it could be effected honorably, and reconciled to his feelings. Of this conversation with lord Camden the duke apprised Mr. Canning, who of course concluded that the former would, as from the duke, make the proper communication to lord Castlereagh: but a strong desire felt by the duke and lord Camden to consult lord Castlereagh's feelings, and to arrange matters for a change in minis-

¹⁷ The classical reader will recognise a similar coincidence of circumstances common to this, and the still more fatal Athenian expedition: the splendor of its appearance in the Piræus; the crowds that went to view it; the confidence of its projectors; the tardiness and imbecility of its commander; the fatal fever from the Lysimelian marsh; and its total discomfiture! Here, however, the parallel fails: Athens fell before her foes: but England was not a *republic*, and ultimately triumphed.

terial offices with his majesty, who was extremely anxious to retain Mr. Canning, induced them to postpone this communication: in such a concealment, however, Mr. Canning was so far from acquiescing, that he strongly remonstrated against it with the duke, and frequently tendered his resignation to the king; yet was still persuaded to continue in office at the express request of lord Castlereagh's associates, who assured him that ministerial changes were determined on; and strongly urged him to remain in office, although such changes could not be effected before the termination of the Walcheren expedition: if this interval, it was said, were allowed for the friends of lord Castlereagh to reconcile him to the change, every public object might be effected, without injury to private feelings, and without breaking up the cabinet. Yielding to these assurances Mr. Canning continued to act until the second of September, when the result of the expedition became known; and on the third he wrote to the duke of Portland reminding him of the period fixed for the new arrangement of which he fully expected that lord Castlereagh had been apprised. To his great astonishment, however, the duke informed him, on the sixth, that no steps had been taken in such an arrangement; that various difficulties presented themselves unknown to Mr. Canning; and that his grace himself had resolved to retire from office. Mr. Canning then requested that his own resignation might instantly be laid before the king, and desisted from any farther attendance in the cabinet; though he continued to execute his official duties until his place could be supplied.

These resignations were of course succeeded by that disclosure which had been so long and so unwarrantably delayed;¹⁸ when lord Castlereagh, on the eighth, requested his majesty's permission to retire from office,

¹⁸ Lord chancellor Eldon in a letter of the 4th of October, candidly took blame to himself for his share in this concealment; (see his Life, vol. ii. p. 87) and the duke of Portland assured Mr. Canning that he should be at all times ready to avow that such concealment originated with himself—that he had enjoined it on all those with whom he had communicated, from motives of policy which he was ready to justify, and that he was desirous of taking all the imputed blame upon himself.—See Ann. Register for 1809, Appendix, p. 586.

CHAP.
L.

1809.

Perceval
adminis-
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Celebra-
tion of a
jubilee.

and in the moment of irritation sent his challenge to Mr. Canning; not reflecting that his own friends were responsible for that concealment, which alone gave him a plea for demanding satisfaction. As three ministers had now resigned office, the remaining members of the cabinet looked about in dismay for new colleagues and a new head:¹⁹ their adherents were beginning to forsake them, and their situation appeared so forlorn, that proposals were sent to lords Grey and Grenville, for the purpose of forming an extended and combined administration; but those noble persons absolutely declined to accept office; the latter observing, 'that his objections were not personal; they applied to the principles of the government itself, and to the circumstances which attended its appointment.' In consequence of this refusal, Mr. Perceval took the post of first lord of the treasury, in addition to that which he held as chancellor of the exchequer; the marquis Wellesley was called from his Spanish embassy to the foreign department; lord Liverpool, who had lately succeeded to this title on the death of his father, was transferred from the home department to that of war and the colonies, Mr. Ryder being appointed his successor; and lord Palmerston was appointed secretary at war, in the room of sir James Pulteney.

The events of this disastrous year shook the popularity of ministers; but they were fortunate in being able to divert public attention from a disgraceful expedition, which increased the debt by twenty millions, and covered thousands of our people with mourning, to national rejoicings in honor of the sovereign. On the twenty-fifth of October, George III. commenced the fiftieth year of his reign; and the day was celebrated as a jubilee, with thanksgivings, feasts, and illuminations throughout the British dominions: these loyal demonstrations, however, were mingled with deep sympathy for the king, now laboring under the infirmities of age, tortured by the cares of government,

¹⁹ 'Even George Rose,' said lord Eldon, 'begins to be in a quandary: his wife, son, and daughter are on his back.'—Life of Lord Eldon, vol. ii. p. 96.

and afflicted with almost total blindness; whilst he was engaged in war against a power, which had shaken every throne in Europe, except his own, to its very foundation.

CHAP.
L.
1809.

The name of the princess of Wales came again this year before the public. Having by an extravagant expenditure exceeded her large income of £22,000, which had been assisted by a grant of £34,000 from the droits of the admiralty, she became subjected to the unpleasant importunity of creditors; while her friend, Mr. Perceval, could not, under such circumstances, make any application to the house of commons. In this case, the prince, her husband, came forward in a manner creditable to himself; undertaking to pay the whole sum, though his own embarrassments had considerably increased, on condition that he should be no longer considered liable to such payment; and that the tradesmen of the princess, like his own, should be obliged to send in their claims within a specified time.

Domestic
occurrences.

Various events, some of an alarming, and others of a cheering character, contributed to render this year memorable in our annals: among the former, may be reckoned the terrible conflagrations that occurred in the metropolis. Last year, one of our great national theatres, in Covent-garden, had been destroyed by fire; and now, the other in Drury-lane experienced a similar fate: the accident occurred on the night of the twenty-fourth of February, while the commons were occupied in discussing the subject of the Spanish war; Mr. Sheridan, whose whole property was involved in the concern, being present with an intention of speaking. The house became suddenly illuminated by the blaze; and its cause being ascertained by several members who rushed out, a motion was made to adjourn the debate; but Sheridan, with great calmness, observed, that 'whatever might be the extent of private calamity, he hoped it would not interfere with the public business of the country.' He then left the house; and, proceeding to Drury-lane, witnessed, with a fortitude that strongly interested all who beheld him, the intire

CHAP.
L.

1809.

destruction of his property.²⁰ A short time before this calamity, St. James's palace also was discovered to be in flames; which burst out about two o'clock in the morning of the twenty-first of January, at the south-east angle; and the inhabitants were soon afterwards seen rushing out, half-naked, in all directions: though every exertion was made to stop the conflagration, which in about two hours illuminated great part of the metropolis, a large portion of this venerable pile was destroyed; the damage being estimated at more than £100,000. Nor were such ravages confined either to public buildings, or to the capital: the splendid mansion of the honorable Frederic North, in St. James's place, was destroyed in July, during the owner's absence in Malta; and the exertions of his friend, Mr. Wyndham, in saving a valuable library from destruction, occasioned the loss of that eminent statesman to the kingdom. On the third of March, about midnight, flames arose from the south-west angle of the front of Christ Church, in Oxford: fortunately however the night was calm, and the supply of water plentiful; or the noble hall of that magnificent structure must have been destroyed: the amount of damage exceeded £12,000; the only loss that was irreparable falling on Dr. White, whose precious collection of oriental manuscripts suffered a serious diminution.

But if the fiery element laid in ruins many of our noble edifices, it more than compensated these losses by the lasting benefit which it conferred on the community; since the use of gas in lighting streets and houses was now adopted in Pall Mall. The excellence of this invention is but faintly seen in the advancement of domestic comfort and convenience: its utility in exposing and preventing crime, or aiding the police in our crowded cities, under the peculiar circumstances of the age, place it in the light of a providential discovery. Nor must the institution of a national vaccine establishment be omitted, which was set on foot in April, under patronage of the king and parlia-

²⁰ Moore's Life of Sheridan, vol. ii. p. 368.

ment, for the promotion of a system, which promises to repair the ravages both of war and pestilence. For the relief of human suffering, though in a less degree, captain Manby, of the royal navy, during the same month, made several successful experiments, with a small mortar, to throw a coiled rope over stranded vessels; by which a communication with the shore may be gained, and the crews preserved: a project also, of great importance to agricultural and manufacturing interests, was executed by the patriotism of the king: taking advantage of our peculiar relations with Spain, his majesty introduced into his kingdom a large flock of the finest Merino sheep from that country, within the limits of which they had been hitherto confined with a scrupulous and rigid jealousy. Several other incidents contributed to render this period remarkable; among which, was the Herculean task accomplished by captain Barclay, of walking 1000 miles in 1000 successive hours: he finished his last mile in the first quarter, with great ease and spirit, amidst an immense concourse of spectators; winning £3000 by his feat, on which the aggregate amount of betting exceeded £100,000. The twenty-first of June was marked by the death of the celebrated Daniel Lambert, which took place at Stamford; he was in his fortieth year, and weighed fifty-two stone eleven pounds: his coffin, six feet four inches long by four feet four inches wide, was built on two axle-trees and four clog wheels; and the wall of the room in which he lay being taken down, the corpse was rolled to the grave, and lowered into it by means of an inclined plane.

Before we conclude the list of events interesting or important to Great Britain, we must advert to the more decided character which the disagreement existing between this country and America now began to assume. Both countries indeed professed an anxiety for the revival of amicable relations; and, with the intent of removing irritation, the British orders in council were so far modified, in the beginning of April, as to allow neutral vessels to

Disputes
with Ame-
rica.

CHAP. trade with any port whatever, unless it was in a
I. state of actual blockade; the blockade being confined
1809. to France, Holland, and the ports of Italy under
French dominion. About the time when these regulations were issued, an assurance was given by the honorable D. M. Erskine, British envoy, that our orders in council of January and November, 1807, would be withdrawn, as far as they concerned the United States, on the tenth of June, under a persuasion that intercourse would be renewed with Great Britain; in virtue of which assurance, Mr. Madison immediately issued a proclamation, announcing that the trade between England and America would be renewed on the tenth of June: this pleasing prospect however vanished, when it was discovered, that the arrangements entered into by Mr. Erskine with the American president were unauthorised by his instructions, and could not be carried into effect. Previously to these, the American government, finding that the embargo pressed heavily on every part of the community, had raised it with regard to all other nations, and substituted in its stead a prohibitory system of non-intercourse and non-importation toward England and France; with this reservation, however, that if either of those belligerent powers should so far revoke or modify its edicts, that they ceased to violate the commercial rights of the United States, trade with that country should be immediately renewed. As a number of American vessels, relying on the unratified arrangements, had set sail for Europe, the orders of council were suspended in their favor, and Mr. Jackson was appointed to succeed Mr. Erskine as minister to the United States: the discussions however which ensued took so unfavorable a turn, that he soon retired from Washington to New York, having received notice that no farther communications from him would be attended to. Thus the seeds of dissention between Great Britain and her still irritated colonies were ripening fast into a new war.

CHAPTER LI.

GEORGE III. (CONTINUED.)—1810.

pening of parliament—Address, and debates on it—Carried in favor of ministers—Motion carried for a committee of inquiry—Exclusion of strangers from the gallery of the house of commons—Lord Chatham's conduct reprehended—Lord Porchester's resolutions respecting ministers negatived; and a vote of approval carried—Proceedings of sir Francis Burdett, in consequence of which he is committed to the Tower, &c.—Navy estimates—Bills against granting offices in reversion, and for a finance committee—Mr. Horner's motion for a bullion committee carried—Pension to lord Wellington—Proposals of sir Samuel Romilly to alter the criminal law—The budget—Petition of the Irish catholics rejected; also a motion for parliamentary reform—Lord Grey's motion in the lords for an address to his majesty on the state of the nation rejected—Addresses on the slave-trade—Twelfth report of the commission of military inquiry—Prorogation of parliament—The king's illness—Causes assigned for it, in public agitation, the affair of the duke of Cumberland, and the death of the princess Amelia—Meeting of parliament—Precedent of 1788 followed—Mr. Perceval's three resolutions—Debates on them—Determination of parliament to proceed by bill in the formation of a regency—Restricted regency accepted by the prince of Wales—Protest of the royal dukes—Proceedings of parliament in this affair—Regency bill passed—Affairs of the continent—Causes of Napoleon's declining power, when his prospects seemed most bright—Great crisis in the affairs of England—Our foreign conquests—Prospect of affairs in the peninsula—Epitome of operations in Spain—Lord Wellington's situation and campaign in Portugal, &c.—Domestic incidents.

PARLIAMENT was opened by commission on the twenty-
ninth of January; and the speech contained little
aside notice of the late disasters, and the necessity of
granting farther assistance to Spain and Portugal.
The motion for an address, which, as usual, afforded
an opportunity for young senators to display their

Meeting of
parliament.

CHAP.
I. I. ---
1810.

oratorical powers, introduced Mr. Peel with advantage to the house of commons, where he seconded it in a very animated speech; advising its adoption, like other speakers on the ministerial side, because it called for no approbation of what had passed, and opposed no impediment in the way of inquiry. After entering into a very encouraging detail of the internal prosperity of the country, he alluded to the aggression, usurpation, and tyranny of Bonaparte, as points generally acknowledged; but to resist him effectually, we ought to be unanimous: every heart and hand should join to strengthen the common cause. An amendment was proposed by lord Gower, and seconded by the honorable J. W. Ward, in which the conduct of ministers in the Spanish war and the late expedition was severely censured, and their incapacity clearly exposed. Lord Kensington recommended a dutiful address to the throne, desiring inquiry, but deprecating all expressions that might appear to prejudice the conduct of administration; on which, Mr. Ponsonby observed, 'that the amendment did not criminate any particular person; its only object was to inform his majesty, that the house, feeling deeply the disgraceful calamity of the last campaign, was resolved to inquire into its causes, and to punish the authors. During the late campaign in Spain, Bonaparte had quitted that country; and it was known to ministers themselves that Austria had determined to attempt once more to stem the torrent of his ambition: his leaving Spain must have shown them that he considered Austria as his most formidable enemy: they had the best means of information; and they were enabled to choose the best point for a diversion, that presented itself in favor of either country. If they had chosen such a point, and confined our concentrated forces to one object, they might have effected some grand operation. After all the notorious misconduct of ministers, it was still contended that the house should first inquire, and suspend all definitive judgment till the result of such inquiry was known. What was meant by this?—That they were to begin by taking those things as problematical,

which were universally acknowledged and established? that they were gravely to inquire, whether the climate of Walcheren was, or was not, unhealthy? whether the season at which the British army made its descent on that island was, or was not, unfavorable? whether ministers were, or were not, wholly ignorant of the climate and circumstances of a place within twenty hours' sail of England? Were they also to inquire who was selected to command the greatest expedition that ever left the British shores? was that another of the notorieties, of which it was so necessary to ascertain the truth? Who then was this commander? a general wise from experience, and illustrious from the splendor of many victories? No: the flower of the British troops had been committed, in an evil hour, to the guidance of that inauspicious, ill-omened officer, of whom nothing more was known, than that he was once at the head of the admiralty; and such was his inability to discharge the duties of the department, that the minister had not courage to allow the functions of the state to sleep beneath the indolence even of his own brother: the situation of the country was indeed awful; and if they, whose ignorance and obstinacy had placed it in that situation, were now to be exempted from responsibility, its danger would not, on that account, be less alarming: the present was no time for half-measures, or civility; for shaping amendments to the niceties of those gentlemen who revolted at the very idea of punishment; but it was time for the house to put its penal powers into effect, and to pursue with unwearied zeal public defaulters of every description.'

CHAP.
LI.
— 1810.

Lord Castlereagh, with unblushing effrontery, said, that being conscious of the wise policy on which the expeditions, which had attracted so much of that day's discussion, were formed, he had more reason to court than to shrink from inquiry; nor did he fear the exercise of that penal justice, with which Mr. Ponsonby had threatened him. Canning, though he had no direct share in the advice that sent forth an expedition, which exposed our councils to the derision of Bona-

CHAP.
LI.

1810.

parte and all Europe, yet felt himself to have been, as one of the cabinet ministers, a participator in the disgrace; and accordingly attempted to defend the measure as well as himself: but he totally failed in satisfying the independent portion of the house. Whitbread declared boldly, 'that he looked on Mr. Canning as more responsible than the noble lord himself for the failure of the expedition; having done what, in the history of the country, no other man could be found to have done. The right honorable gentleman, knowing what the interests of the nation required; aware also of all the measures which were in contemplation, or in progress, and among them of the expedition that government was then preparing; did, on the sixteenth of April, go and declare to the duke of Portland, that the minister, who had the conduct of this expedition, was not, however estimable he might be for private virtues and good qualities, competent to the duties of his public station: not satisfied with this, for fear of any mistake, he made the same communication to his majesty: but to the noble lord himself, he never communicated such an opinion; yet suffered him to originate, and conduct to its close, an expedition which has terminated so disgracefully to the country: he therefore entreated the house to avenge the cause of the public on the ministers who subjected the nation to such a calamity; but more especially on that individual, who declared both to the duke of Portland and to the king, that the statesman entrusted with its conduct was incompetent to his situation.' Nor was Mr. Canning the only object of the honorable gentleman's censure. It was not without reason that he went on to notice various actions, which had lately graced our arms, while they disgraced our cabinet. 'British victories,' he observed, 'were this night especial themes of congratulation: Maida, Corunna, Vimiero, and Talavera were held up as monuments of our eternal glory; but he beheld them only as so many gladiatorial exhibitions; for none of them were happy in their consequences. Maida left the inhabitants at the mercy of a cruel enemy; and at Corunna we lost our general,

to prove the valor of our soldiers. What! was our population so redundant, that we could spare men to prove what no one doubted? was British valor so questionable, that a bloody experiment was necessary to show it? had we so many skilful generals, that they were become superfluous? the battle of Vimiero, followed by the disgraceful convention of Cintra, had better never have taken place; and Talavera was, at best, but an exhibition of victorious rashness.' After this, Mr. Whitbread proceeded in a very animated strain to animadvert on the composition of the cabinet; commenting on the rebuff which its director had received from those to whom his first application was made, as well as on its present inefficiency; deserted as it was by two of its leading members, and composed of a motley crew respected by no party; while the tenure by which this incapable junta held their places, lay in the thralldom of millions of their fellow subjects. 'It has been observed by our enemy,' he said, 'that the genius of France guided our armies: alas! it now presides in our cabinet! for, surely, whether we consider their ignorance, their imbecility, their bigotry, or the fate with which Providence visits all their measures, our enemy, had he the nomination, could not select men more suitable to his ends, or more pernicious to our interests.' Mr. Perceval, who had been accused of remaining obstinately silent under the charges urged against himself and his administration, could not sit still under this vehement attack: his defence however was neither spirited nor satisfactory. Of the transactions that led to the retreat of his two colleagues from the cabinet, he professed his ignorance until the close of the last session of parliament, and then he did not think it expedient to make himself a party in them; especially as an expedition of great importance was in forwardness, with which the noble lord was intimately connected. With respect to his own place as head of the present administration, he pretended that it was by no means an object of his desire; instancing the rejected application which had been made to other parties as a proof of his own re-

CHAP.

LI.

1810.

luctance to accept it: he then went over the other topics in discussion; and concluded by defending the indefensible conduct of administration with respect to the late expeditions. The address was carried in favor of ministers by 263 votes against 167; and when it was brought up on the twenty-fifth, sir Francis Burdett declared, 'it was with the utmost mortification he perceived, that the unparalleled calamities which we had lately suffered in the waste of blood and treasure, had not made on members of that assembly the impressions which might naturally have been expected: ministers were still supported by the same kind of majorities, which they commanded in times of less disaster: they were still supported by the same men, and the same line of argument; seeing this, he felt more thoroughly convinced of the necessity of taking into early consideration that great measure, which he had recommended at the close of the late session; *a reform in parliament*. He did not mean to compare the pretensions of one set of public men with those of another; but he never before witnessed the measures of any set so completely abandoned as in the last debate: the minister really seemed not to have a word to say in his own defence.' The address in the lords was carried by 144 against 92: and it may be observed, that in both houses the conduct of lord Wellington was very properly kept distinct from that of ministers by those who animadverted most severely on their measures.

On the twenty-sixth, lord Porchester rose in the commons to move for a committee of the whole house, which might inquire into the policy and conduct of the late expedition to Walcheren, by examining oral evidence as well as written documents: the motion was seconded by Mr. Wyndham, and opposed by Mr. Croker, that most alert and uncompromising of ministerial allies, who moved the previous question: Mr. Perceval also spoke on the same side; but the loudly-expressed indignation of the public had penetrated even into the recesses of St. Stephen's chapel; and the proposition was carried by a majority of 195

against 186. On the first of February, the day before the investigation commenced, Mr. Charles Yorke gave notice, that he should, during its continuance, enforce a standing order of the house for the exclusion of strangers : Mr. Sheridan strongly and justly deprecated the idea of conducting so interesting and important an inquiry with closed doors ; asking whether it could be endured that the people should be kept completely ignorant of parliamentary proceedings at such an awful moment ? a large majority of members, however, decided that the standing order should be observed. A considerable portion of the session was occupied in this investigation ; which, while it exposed the ignorance and incapacity of its author, showed that lord Chatham's confused and dilatory operations before Flushing were the more immediate cause of its failure. Both the house and the country read with astonishment the following passage in a despatch sent to him by lord Castlereagh :—' His majesty rejoices that this serious obstacle to the vigorous prosecution of the ulterior objects of the expedition has been seasonably overcome ; and feels persuaded that those important objects will be followed up with the same energy, perseverance, and rapidity, which have hitherto distinguished your lordship's operations !' Among other papers, was a copy of the earl's own statement of his proceedings, presented to the king on the fourteenth of February, 1810. The tenor of this document was to impute blame to the naval part of the armament ; and his lordship represented his failure to have arisen, either from insufficient arrangements on the part of the admiral ;¹ or from unavoidable difficulties inherent in the nature of the expedition itself ;

CHAP.
L.I.
— 1810. —

¹ ' Nothing,' said lord Eldon, in a letter to his brother of the 4th of October, ' can be worse than the Walcheren business : but that business itself will grow worse and worse. The island must be evacuated ; and I think you will soon hear of the army accusing the navy, and the navy accusing the army, as the cause of the failure : there will be warm blood in the two services.'—See Life of Lord Eldon, vol. ii. p. 104. In reference to this subject appeared the following squib in the journals of the day :—

The earl of Chatham, with his sword drawn,
Said he was waiting for sir Richard Strachan :
Sir Richard, longing to be at 'em,
Said he was waiting for the earl of Chatham.

CHAP.
LL.
1810.

which, being intirely of a naval nature, did not come within his province. The presentation of such a document to the sovereign by a military commander, without the intervention of any responsible minister, and without the knowlege of the accused party, was pronounced to be a clandestine and unconstitutional attempt to poison the royal ear: a motion was accordingly made by Mr. Whitbread for an address to his majesty, praying that copies of all papers submitted to him by the earl of Chatham concerning the expedition to the Scheldt, might be laid before that house; and this was carried against ministers by a majority of seven: a vote of censure was then proposed by Mr. Whitbread, but amended by Mr. Canning, in which lord Chatham's conduct was pronounced highly reprehensible; and his lordship, to avoid the consequences of an address for his removal, resigned the office of master-general of the ordnance. When the examination of evidence on this ill-fated expedition was concluded, lord Porchester moved two sets of resolutions; to the effect, that the enterprise was undertaken under circumstances which afforded no rational hope of adequate success, and at the precise season of the year when the disease which had proved so fatal was known to be most prevalent; that its advisers were therefore highly reprehensible; and that their conduct, in delaying the evacuation of Walcheren, called for the severest censure. After four nights' debate, there appeared for the first set of these resolutions 227, and against it 275 voices: a decision was called for on a miserable expedient of general Crauford, who proposed an amendment, declaring, that although the house considered with regret the lives which had been lost, it was of opinion that his majesty's ministers had proceeded on good grounds in undertaking the expedition: and this, though substantially at variance with itself, was carried by a majority of forty. The second set of resolutions, censuring ministers for delaying the evacuation of Walcheren, was negatived by 275 votes against 224; and a resolution, approving their conduct, in retaining the island till the time

when it was abandoned, was carried by 255 against 232: the indignant nation plainly perceived that the house felt unwilling to sanction the disgraceful measures of the principals concerned in this expedition; but that it was too courtly to visit the commander with any severity of punishment, and too slavishly dependent to condemn the acts of a cabinet which did not seem likely to be dissolved: though the culprits therefore escaped, the cause of *parliamentary reform* advanced another step.

CHAP.
LI.
1810.

The exclusion of strangers during these proceedings, when it would have been more prudent to conciliate than to irritate the public, elicited strong, but well-deserved animadversions from sir Francis Burdett, who observed, 'that the house, in point of character and reputation, had nothing to boast of:' and being called to account by Mr. Perceval for these offensive remarks, he ridiculed that sensitive delicacy, which, while it connived at the most corrupt practices, shrank from a bare mention of the truth. The subject was afterwards selected as a question for dispute by the manager of a debating club, denominated the 'British Forum,' where the conduct of Mr. Yorke was so freely censured, that the foolish pride of that gentleman took fire, and he determined to punish the delinquent: accordingly, on his complaint of a breach of privilege, the conductor of the institution, John Gale Jones, was brought to the bar of the house; and, notwithstanding his acknowledgement of the offence, as well as a respectful apology for it, was committed to Newgate. Sir Francis Burdett was not present on this occasion; but when he re-appeared in his seat, he loudly condemned the measure as a violation of the common law, of Magna Charta, and of the trial by jury, in a case where the offence was punishable by the ordinary course of justice: he then moved for the immediate discharge of the offender; but the proposal was negatived by 153 against 14: in consequence of this decision, the honorable baronet published a copy of his speech, containing the effusions of his indignation, and accompanied by a letter to his constituents,

CHAP.

I.L.

1810.

Proceed-
ings against
sir F. Bur-
dett.

inveighing with extreme asperity against that domineering spirit of a corrupt assembly, which, while it pretended to represent his majesty's subjects, invaded their rights; and denying the power of the house to imprison the people of England.

In consequence of this attack, the Commons determined to assert their privileges, which, it was said, were within their sole cognisance: as it had been maintained in the case of Jones, that a libel, not being an obstruction to parliamentary business, could not be a lawful ground of commitment by either house, sir John Anstruther replied, that, if not a personal, it was a constructive impediment, and justified authoritative interference: the house agreeing in this doctrine, and considering the publication in question to be a gross and scandalous libel, a resolution was carried, by 190 against 150 votes, that sir Francis should be committed to the Tower on the speaker's warrant.

Instead, however, of acquiescing in this resolution, he disputed the warrant as an illegal document, and expressed a determination to resist not only that, but any other force which might be employed to coerce him: on this, the opinion of the attorney-general was taken; in consequence of which, the serjeant-at-arms, accompanied by a number of police officers and a detachment of troops, proceeded to his mansion, which they entered by a window; and after some altercation, conveyed this 'friend of the people' to the Tower: his escort however was grossly insulted by the way; and, on its return, was attacked with so much violence, that the soldiers were obliged to fire in self-defence; when two individuals were killed, and several wounded; after which, the mob assembled about the house of the baronet, and committed many outrages. On the tenth of April, an offensive letter sent by sir Francis to the speaker, after the receipt of his warrant, became a subject of debate; and though a resolution of the house declared it to be a flagrant breach of privilege, the anger which it excited led to no farther measures of punishment: some public bodies, particularly the

electors of Westminster and London, petitioned with much warmth for his release; but he continued in confinement to the end of the session; when he privately retired from the Tower by water, to the great disappointment of a crowd, prepared to escort him, with popular applause, to his residence.

CHAP.
LI.
1810.

Sir Francis now commenced actions against the speaker, who issued the warrant for his arrest; against the serjeant-at-arms for executing it, as well as for breaking open his house; and against earl Moira, governor of the Tower, for illegal imprisonment: his object was to ascertain whether an appeal lay to a court of law against the house, acting as accuser and judge in proceedings that affected the liberty of the subject: the judges however would not admit that any unlawful measure had been adopted in his case; or that the warrant issued by authority of the house was an illegal instrument: the attempt therefore to overthrow this branch of parliamentary privileges, tended only to confirm it; and gave to the claims of the house of commons a solemn recognition by our courts of law.

On the thirty-first of January, Mr. Ward moved the navy estimates, the sum total of which was £10,897,381; being less, by £1,000,000, than that of last year: he accounted for this reduction, from the new regulations for keeping public accounts, and from an actual diminution of expenses. Mr. Banks also asked leave to bring in a bill for making perpetual an act, passed last year, to prevent the granting offices in reversion: though vehemently opposed by the minister, he was supported by individuals of all parties in the house, and the question was carried by acclamation; but it was lost in the upper house: to the next motion, for the appointment of a finance committee, Mr. Perceval gave his decided opposition; but this also was carried against him.

On the first of February, Mr. Horner moved for various accounts and returns respecting the state of the circulating medium, and trade in bullion; on the production of which, a committee was appointed, who

CHAP.
LI.

1810.

expressed an opinion, that the evils complained of were to be attributed to an excessive issue of Bank paper: and their report stated, 'that a general rise of all prices, a rise in the market price of gold, and a fall in the foreign exchanges, would be the effect of an undue quantity of circulating medium in a country which had adopted a currency not exportable to other countries, or convertible at will into a coin that can be exported.' It was added, that no sufficient remedy could be pointed out, except a repeal of the law which suspended cash payments at the Bank; to effect which, some difficulties must be encountered: but all hazard to the stability of the Bank, and all injury to public credit, might be obviated, by restricting cash payments for two years from the present time, and by entrusting to the Bank itself the charge of conducting and completing the operation.

On the ninth of February, the earl of Liverpool moved for the grant of a pension of £2000 to lord Wellington and his two next heirs, and a bill founded on this motion subsequently passed through parliament: on the same day, in the house of commons, sir Samuel Romilly proposed some alterations in the criminal law. The indiscriminate application of the sentence of death to crimes differing greatly in their degree of turpitude, had long been a subject of complaint: in his opinion, nothing could be more erroneous or mischievous, than that particular punishments should be allotted to particular offences, and that the law should not be acted on: he believed that not one out of six or seven, who received sentence, suffered the punishment annexed to it; which rendered our law, not a preventive, but a manifest cause of the commission of crimes; for these were prevented much more effectually by the certainty than by the severity of punishment. The solicitor-general contended for the discretionary power with which the judges were invested, as a salutary terror; and Mr. Perceval would not allow that our penal law deserved the epithet of 'sanguinary,' since the practice was a part of the code. Leave however was given for sir

Samuel to bring in a bill to amend the act of king William relating to private stealing in shops, warehouses, &c., to the amount of five shillings; also one to amend the act of Anne as to stealing in a dwelling-house to the value of forty shillings; and another, to amend the act of George II. as to theft on navigable rivers to the same value. Though little more than discussion was produced at present by the efforts of this enlightened statesman to ameliorate our sanguinary code, yet great praise is due to him for laying the foundation of that reform which has since taken place.

On the sixteenth of May, the chancellor of the exchequer brought forward his budget; and the supplies voted for the year amounted to £52,185,000, of which, the proportion for Ireland was £6,106,000. No new taxes were imposed; but a loan of £8,000,000 was borrowed at the favorable rate of four pounds, four shillings, and three pence three farthings per cent. The foreign subsidies were, £400,000 for Sicily, and £980,000 for Portugal. A vote of credit was passed for £3,000,000; and Mr. Perceval made a very cheering report of British exports and imports; adding, that our orders in council had already reduced the receipts of customs in France, from the sum of £2,500,000, to that of £500,000.

On the eighteenth, a petition from the Irish catholics was presented by Mr. Grattan, who, in a long and luminous speech, brought forward all the arguments that could be adduced in its favor: the debate continued by adjournment for several nights; but the petition was rejected by a large majority; and the same fate attended one similar to it in the upper house. A motion by Mr. Brande on the subject of parliamentary reform was also negatived by a majority of 234 against 115.

A subject which now began strongly to occupy public attention, was brought before the house of lords on the thirtieth of May, by a motion for the second reading of the bill carried by sir S. Romilly in the commons, for abolishing the punishment of death in cases of privately stealing to the amount of five shil-

CHAP.

LI.

1810.

lings in a shop: but the arguments which prevailed then, were regarded by the upper house as too speculative to be safe. Lord Ellenborough led the opposition to this bill; and was seconded by lord Eldon, who preferred discretionary powers residing in a judge, to a fixed punishment in every case excluding the particular circumstances: accordingly the bill was thrown out by a majority of 31 against 11. On the sixth of June certain petitions from the Irish catholics, which the earl of Donoughmore moved to refer to a committee of the whole house, were rejected by 154 votes against 68.

On the thirteenth, lord Grey brought forward a motion, 'to take into consideration the state of the nation;' which he prefaced by a very eloquent and argumentative speech. After expatiating on the enormous power acquired by Napoleon, the subjection of the whole continent to his dominion or influence, and the only hope which remained for Europe in the vigor and resistance of this country; he exposed the inefficiency and short-sighted policy of those measures which ministers had generally pursued: he then animadverted on the mismanagement of our internal resources, and the evils of our domestic policy; dwelling on the pernicious effects of our extended paper currency, and on the necessity of some systematic arrangement of finances, to prevent the anticipation of our remaining resources. After a slight allusion to the expediency of conciliating so large a portion of British subjects, as that which constituted the Roman catholic body in these realms, his lordship thus expressed himself on the subject of parliamentary reform:—'This question has long been to me one of serious contemplation: I took an active part in it at an early age: I pursued my object with all that eager hope and sanguine expectation so natural to the ardor of youth. I will not say, that in subsequent times there have not been some differences from my former impressions: but of this I assure your lordships; that on its great grounds, it never has been abandoned by me: to the temperate and judicious reformation of

abuses I am now a decided friend; and whenever it shall be brought forward, it shall receive from me a sincere and anxious assistance: but I never did, nor ever will, rest my views of salutary reform on the ground of theoretic perfection; though I am always ready to correct by the constitution a practical inconvenience, where it is practically felt: on this point, I was formerly misrepresented by that description of persons, who even now continue the same course: the folly and presumption of the present day have taken up a new doctrine; that every branch and exercise of our constitution was defined by law, and only to be found in the statute-book: but I have ever understood from the most able men, that the great and fundamental blessing of the British constitution was fixed in the co-operation and harmony of its powers, all leading to free and efficient government.' His lordship here entered into a vindication of himself against the accusation of those who classed him with the members of the Constitutional Society, and the followers of major Cartwright; utterly disclaiming their chimerical notions, though he imputed to them no base designs: with reference to the agitation then prevailing on the subject of parliamentary privileges, he vindicated them, as resting, like other great principles of government, on their utility and known existence; and he concluded by moving an address to his majesty. This motion excited a very animated debate, in which almost all the leading members of the house took part: an amendment was moved by lord Stanhope, in which the commitment of sir F. Burdett by the house of commons for contempt, was brought forward as a prominent subject of censure; when the chancellor, in answer to lord Erskine, who had concurred in this view, briefly vindicated the right of either house to commit for contempts, by analogy to attachments for contempt against the ordinary courts of jurisdiction—a description of process which, he said, was as much a part of the law of the land, as the trial by jury itself. The amendment was negatived without a division; and the original motion rejected; the

CHAP.
LI.
1810.

CHAP. numbers, including proxies, being for it 72, against
 LL it 134.

1810.

Addresses were at this period voted in both houses, on the motion of lord Holland and Mr. Brougham, beseeching his majesty to persevere in his efforts to induce foreign nations to co-operate with him in the abolition of the slave trade. The latter gentleman, with great ability, laid open, not only the state of this abominable traffic in other countries, but the evasion with which its abolition was met in our own; where slave traders, like other smugglers, were in the constant habit of violating the laws: as the penalties were of a peculiar nature, it became only a commercial speculation, a consideration of the risk that might be run for a large profit, if success attended the adventure. A resolution for taking into consideration, early next session, measures to prevent this violation of the law, was unanimously adopted.

The twelfth report of the commissioners of military inquiry disclosed a flagrant instance of public delinquency, in the case of Joseph Hunt, a member of the house of commons, and late treasurer of the board of ordnance. It appeared that this person had misapplied large sums of the public money to his own use; and, on the motion of Mr. Calcraft, he was expelled the house: he had screened himself against farther punishment by emigrating to Lisbon, under the plea of ill health. After a very eventful and stormy session, parliament was prorogued on the twenty-first of June: events however occurred, which rendered it necessary to convoke its members again at an unusual period: these now demand our attention.

Illness of
 his majesty.

In the autumn of this year began the last and long protracted illness of his majesty, which was referred to several proximate causes, both of a public and a domestic nature. The tumults and loss of lives in the metropolis, consequent on the arbitrary construction of its own privileges by parliament, added to the failure of our expeditions, and the prostration of our continental allies, as well as the intense anxiety caused by late dissensions in the cabinet, naturally tended to disturb

a mind enfeebled by age and shaken by infirmity: at the same time, an extraordinary event, accompanied by mysterious circumstances of assassination and suicide, which were never unravelled, happened to his majesty's fifth son, the duke of Cumberland. On the thirty-first of May, his royal highness had retired to rest about one o'clock; but at half-past two, he suddenly received two violent blows or cuts on his head: the first impression on his mind was, that a bat had entered the room; but on receiving a third blow, he jumped out of bed; and as he was making for a door, near the head of it, which opened into a small room, the assassin followed, and cut him across the thighs: not being able to find the alarm-bell, his royal highness called for Neale, his valet-in-waiting, who came to his assistance, and alarmed the household. While the duke went to the porter's room, Neale went to awaken Sellis, an Italian attached also as a valet to his royal highness's service: no answer however being returned to Neale's exclamations, the door was broken open, and Sellis was found dead in his bed, with his throat cut from ear to ear. It was supposed, that, when the alarm was given, being conscious of his guilt, and suspecting they were coming to take him into custody, he immediately committed the suicidal act: his slippers were discovered in a closet adjoining the chamber, in which he concealed himself till his royal master was asleep: he had five different rooms to pass through from thence to his own; and as traces of blood from his left arm were seen on the side of the narrow entrance, his coat was examined, and the left sleeve was found covered with blood: the prince of Wales went to the palace early in the morning to visit his brother, whom he found wounded in six places; and about eight o'clock he set off for Windsor with this sad intelligence, which could not fail to shock violently the mind of his royal father. The cause however most commonly assigned for the king's afflicting malady, was the illness of his favorite daughter, the princess Amelia, the termination of whose long sufferings was now evidently approaching: in October,

CHAP.
I.I.

1810.

this amiable lady had an attack of erysipelas, which was attended with such excruciating pain, as could not fail to shatter a frame naturally delicate, and weakened by incurable disease: throughout the whole, she displayed a sublime fortitude; her pious resignation to the will of Providence increasing in proportion to the afflictions which she endured. While languishing in expectation of her last hour, she was constantly attended by her royal father, who administered to his child every consolation that could be drawn from religion: but the circumstance of a beloved daughter in the prime of life, passing rapidly to her dissolution in the midst of acute sufferings, naturally preyed on the king's mind; and a particular incident is related, as having brought on that aberration of intellect, in which he remained to the close of his earthly pilgrimage. About the twentieth of November, the princess, supposing her end to be nigh at hand, ordered a jeweller to prepare a mourning ring, containing a lock of her hair, with the inscription, 'Remember me,' and to bring it before three o'clock next day: when his majesty came, according to his unfailing custom, at that hour, and held out his hand to the sufferer, she placed it on his finger without uttering a word; and the father, it was said, never recovered the shock thus given to his feelings: his mental distress immediately became great; and in a few days the royal family were alarmed by symptoms of that dreadful malady, which ever afterwards afflicted him.

Debates on
the regency
bill.

Parliament met on the first of November, when there was no power either to prorogue or to open it; as the king was not present, and no commission could be sent; for the chancellor did not think proper to affix the great seal to it without the royal signature: in this case, the precedent of 1788 was followed, when the peers and the commons remained in their separate chambers; the chancellor in the former, and Mr. Pitt in the latter, informing their respective houses, which had assembled without the usual notice or summons, of the impropriety of proceeding to any public business under such circumstances; after which an ad-

jourment of fifteen days was unanimously resolved on. Committees were now appointed to examine the physicians attending his majesty; and successive adjournments took place until the thirteenth of December, when the houses met; and as it appeared from medical reports that the species of insanity under which his majesty labored held out very slight hopes of his recovery, at least for a considerable period, the chancellor of the exchequer took measures for the appointment of a regency, and brought forward three propositions. One, declaring the incapacity of the king to perform the functions of royalty, was unanimously agreed to:—another, asserting the right of the two houses to supply this defect in the executive power, was carried with the single dissentient voice of sir Francis Burdett, who could not acquiesce in the declaration, ‘that the lords spiritual and temporal, and the commons of the united kingdom, lawfully, fully, and freely represented all estates of this realm;’ for it was notorious, that instances of corruption had been proved against the house of commons, in the election of which 150 peers had vast influence. In 1688, he said, the city of London, and the respectable gentry throughout the country, who had sat in that house, were called in, by a convention parliament, to settle the great interests of the nation; but now, a house, of which he drew some strong features, summing up its titles with that of ‘the Walcheren parliament,’ had, without any appeal to the people, its constituents, usurped all power to itself: he should therefore declare his solemn protest against the whole proceedings, as aiming a mortal blow against the constitution.—With regard to a third proposition, that means should be devised for giving the royal assent to a bill respecting the exercise of the regal authority during his majesty’s indisposition, Mr. Ponsonby denied that the houses had a right to command the chancellor to apply the king’s seal to an act which was thence to be considered as having the royal sanction; and he moved for an address to the prince of Wales, praying him to take the regal functions on himself during the king’s illness.

CHAP.

LL

1810.

Mr. Canning preferred the precedents of 1788 to those of the Restoration or the Revolution; and spoke in ridicule of sir Francis Burdett, as wishing to call in the assistance of the lord mayor and common council, to settle a regency. Sir Samuel Romilly thought the resolutions inconsistent with each other: 'in one,' said he, 'the right of the lords and commons to fill up the vacancy is asserted; and yet, that vacancy being acknowledged, the royal assent to a bill is to be procured, to which his majesty can give no assent: the will of the lords and commons can in no wise be construed into the king's will; nor can they by any means legislate for the nation: as well might a set of men, in common life, make a contract for an insane person, and then employ an individual, as his solicitor, to affix his seal and signature to the deed: in fact, the personal presence of the king, or of a commission signed by him, was essential to every act of legislation; and if the house could dispense with this in one case, they might in others; they might make war or peace, and say such was the king's pleasure.' Mr. Whitbread spoke with great animation in favor of the proceeding by address, which the house rejected; there appearing for it 157, against it 269.

Next day the report of the committee was brought up; and on the second resolution being read, lord W. Russell objected to it as unnecessary, and as requiring the house to vote on abstract propositions. He was supported by sir Francis Burdett, who asserted, that the way of duty in the present case was plain and clear; for that, by addressing the prince, the house would not usurp a disputed power, but exercise an undoubted right: he took this opportunity of replying to the facetious remarks of Mr. Canning; observing, 'that the gloom occasioned by the deaths at Walcheren, and all the miseries of that disgraceful expedition, in which he had been convicted of acting with a colleague whose incapacity he had denounced, might have suspended his drolleries; especially, if he reflected, that there never was a minister in this country who so much deserved impeachment: he also

might have recollected, that the corporation of London was an important body in our history; and it little became him to despise the city, who had not thought it beneath his dignity to meet at one of its taverns a set of jobbers and contractors, whom he entertained with speeches on affairs of state.' Various speakers delivered their sentiments; some opposing what they considered a very unconstitutional measure, by which the house would make itself king, in order to assent to its own act; while others contended, not only that the method of 1788 ought to be received as a complete precedent, but that the proceeding by address would be fraught with absurdity and contradiction. For what was proposed to be done? That the two houses should present an address to the prince, praying him to take on himself the executive power: if he agreed to this prayer, the natural supposition would be, that he was constitutional regent already: he would open parliament, as his royal father would have done; and yet he was not actually regent; for parliament, thus opened, was to proceed in the act to make him so: and here a long train of absurdities and inconsistencies would commence. Mr. Perceval, after replying at length to the arguments of his opponents, concluded with asserting, that he would not defer doing what the interest of the country required, though the deed might belong to the executive power, and even require the sign manual; he would act on his own responsibility, regardless of the result. The house divided on the previous question; there being for it fifteen, against it ninety-eight.

The minister's resolutions having been carried in the house of lords, after an amendment proposed by lord Holland had been rejected; it became necessary to define the powers with which the regent was to be invested: accordingly Mr. Perceval sketched out a plan of restrictions similar to that of 1788, with some little variation; and this he forwarded, with a letter, to the prince of Wales. His royal highness, in reply, simply and briefly referred the minister to the letter which on a similar occasion he had sent to Mr. Pitt; in which

CHAP.
LI.
1810.

CHAP.
LI.

1810.

he had protested against the proposed plan of a restricted regency; not because it conveyed any reflection on his personal character, but because, in his opinion, it essentially violated the British constitution: he agreed however to accept the high and important trust, even when so fettered and limited, from a regard to his royal father, and a desire, in the present embarrassing situation of affairs, to exert what ability he might possess. To an extraordinary protest of all the royal dukes, evidently influenced by the heir-apparent, against the proposed restrictions, as unconstitutional, and subversive of those principles which placed their family on the throne, Mr. Perceval very properly replied, 'that he had the satisfaction and consolation to reflect, that they were founded on the precedent of 1788, which had then received the sanction of parliament, and subsequently the approbation of his majesty.'

Prince of
Wales
becomes
regent.

Parliament was opened in the usual form, by a commission under the great seal; after the heads of the regency bill had passed through both houses, as estates of the realm assembled under peculiar circumstances. The bill was again brought forward in its constitutional and regular character; every part of it was again canvassed; and in every succeeding debate the efforts of opposition became more and more feeble. A committee of lords and commons was finally appointed to wait on the prince of Wales and her majesty, to lay before them the resolutions of the two houses relating to each; when, in consequence of the assent of those royal personages, the bill was passed for a restricted regency; and for the care of his majesty's person by the queen, with the assistance of a council: the principal restrictions on the regent were to cease on the first of February, 1812, provided parliament should have been sitting six weeks, and should be then assembled: provision also was made for his majesty's resumption of the regal authority, in case of his restoration to health. The present contest, it may be observed, was animated by a spirit of party very similar to that which appeared in 1788: the whig

opposition now, as then, placed a strong hope in the favorable disposition of the prince toward them, politically and personally; therefore they zealously contended for investing him, at the earliest moment, with the most extensive powers; while ministers felt a strong interest to delay as long as possible the appointment of a regent, who would probably dispossess them of office, and to confine his authority within the narrowest limits: but we must now advert briefly to contemporaneous events in other quarters of the globe.

CHAP.
LI.
1810.

Bonaparte was in the zenith of his glory as emperor; but his real power was in a state of decline: this requires some explanation. It was not long, before that enthusiastic ardor, which rendered the soldiers of the republic irresistible, vanished from the French army: but when this source of impetuous courage was dried up, habits of victory, and affection for the emperor, filled up the void: individual energy being supplied by rigid discipline and skilful tactics, the national warrior, under Napoleon's hands, became the well-drilled, mercenary, imperial soldier; and the veteran bands that conquered at Ulm and Austerlitz, could they have lasted, might have defied the world: but the reckless ambition of Bonaparte tempted him to shed this precious blood profusely on the fields of Spain. In the mean time, the Austrian war broke out: he called for new levies, and placed them under the old standards; but he could not renew the ancient spirit of his troops; nor was this supplied by the discipline which remedied all defects at Austerlitz: the consequences were felt at Essling and at Wagram; where victory bordered very much on defeat: his marshals too being arrived at the highest eminence to which he could raise them, became less obedient to his dictates, and more jealous of each other. The marriage, which he now contracted with Maria Louisa, saved him for a time; but the iniquitous and impolitic contest in Spain was still exhausting his best troops, those veterans of the revolution; and it soon appeared that their loss could not be compensated by conscripts of the empire.

Review of
the con-
tinent.

CHAP.
LI

1810.

Another and equally powerful cause of Napoleon's decline was his violation of the laws of national and social rights. Immediately after his marriage, he set out, accompanied by his bride, on a tour through Belgium, where his attention was particularly turned to the enormous extent of colonial produce which was introduced into his dominions through Holland; and having in vain expostulated on the subject with his brother Louis, who scorned to act as a rigid impoverisher of his own subjects, Napoleon took from him the most important part of his kingdom; uniting to France those provinces which commanded the mouths of the Rhine and Scheldt: soon afterwards, when this was found insufficient, an army was sent into Holland to enforce the counter blockade against the English; on which, Louis resigned his crown, and retired into Germany; while his kingdom was divided into departments, and incorporated with the French empire.

In Sweden, at the unexpected decease of the crown prince, several candidates appeared for the succession; but the national choice fell on marshal Bernadotte, between whom and Bonaparte there existed a secret and long-cherished enmity. As it was important to the emperor to have a staunch friend on the Swedish throne, he covertly opposed this election; and delayed his assent, by proposing restrictions on the independence of the future sovereign. Bernadotte however played his part well: having obtained from Napoleon a reluctant acquiescence, he left the French territories before there was time to retract it; and on his arrival in Sweden, he endeavored by all possible means to ingratiate himself with the nation, and acquire its confidence: at present however he was unable to resist the influence of the French emperor, at whose requisition this northern government was obliged to declare its adherence to the continental system, prohibit all intercourse with Great Britain, and interdict the importation of colonial produce: thus, as in the case of Holland, the enmity of the people was added to that of the sovereign against Napoleon.

Other annexations made to the French empire, were that of the Valais, for the purpose of securing the passage over the Simplon into Italy; and that of the Hans Towns, with the whole territory between the Elbe and the Ems. This last measure not only increased discontent among the northern states of Germany, but gave considerable uneasiness to the czar; and Alexander soon showed his displeasure, by prohibiting any importation of French agricultural produce and manufactures into Russia: as the continental system had destroyed all trade in the ports of the Baltic, he exhibited himself more favorable to the English;² while reciprocal complaints of bad faith led gradually to a disruption of friendly ties between the two emperors. The electorate of Hanover also was annexed to the kingdom of Westphalia; to all dependent states the odious and cruel conscription laws were extended; while in France itself it became necessary to rivet the chains of despotism by a rigid police, and an intire suppression of the liberty of the press. Decrees for seizing and burning English merchandise were carried into execution, not only in France, but in all countries subject to the disastrous rule of its master: the captain of any vessel, holding intercourse with Great Britain or her ships, was rendered subject to the penalty of death, and its owner to that of the brand. 'In the interior of France,' says de Bourrienne, who was at this time French envoy at Hamburg, 'no idea could be formed of the desolation caused by these measures in countries which existed by commerce; and what a spectacle it was to their destitute inhabitants to witness the destruction of property, which, had it been distributed, would have assuaged their misery:' thus popular discontent increased, while the continent was still inundated with British manufactures; for however powerful may be the will of a despot, it is less powerful and less permanent than are the wants of a people. Lastly, it may be observed, that Napoleon lay under the anathemas of the church; and an act of his had lately increased the odium

² See Bourrienne's Memoirs, vol. iii. p. 198.

CHAP.
II.
1810.

which he had acquired by his treatment of its head. The Italian ecclesiastics, by their influence, still maintained the supremacy of the pope: these, being collected together in large bodies at Rome, were constrained by an imperial edict to retire to their respective residences; and when symptoms of dissatisfaction showed themselves, a French corps of 20,000 men was collected in the vicinity; the churches and other public edifices being converted into barracks for their accommodation. At this time, when Napoleon stood most in need of sincere advisers, he was surrounded by court sycophants: the great diplomatist, who could have saved him from folly and disaster, remained in disgrace; and his brother Lucien, disgusted at his tyrannical conduct, had sought an asylum in England: all these circumstances tended to undermine the imperial power, when it seemed at its greatest height, and when it afforded to its possessor the most flattering hopes of permanency.

Great Britain was now in the very struggles of her crisis: the enormous pressure of taxation, increased as it was by rashly-advised and ill-conducted expeditions, weighed heavy on her finances; the Berlin and Milan decrees seriously affected her commerce, before new channels could be found for the exit of her manufactures and colonial produce; the alarming depreciation of her paper currency, with a consequent rise of prices, created general misery among the lower orders; while innumerable bankruptcies were followed by a dreadful reverse of fortune, among those who were accustomed to all the comforts and elegances of life. With regard to government, the cabinet was still weak; the quarrels of its principal members remained unhealed; and the regent was dissatisfied with the restrictions by which he was bound; at the same time, a strong opposition in the house of commons was so adverse to our prosecution of the Spanish war, overrating the powers of Napoleon, undervaluing the talents of our great captain, and disgusted at the inferiority of our war administration, that ministers were hesitating whether they should not withdraw from the

contest; and lord Wellington's cautious proceedings chiefly arose from his knowledge, that any serious reverses in the peninsula would be followed by its abandonment to the enemy.

CHAP.
LI.

1810.

In this fearful state of things, another conflict in a different hemisphere seemed fast approaching, when the American minister in London demanded the recall of Mr. Jackson, our envoy; and Bonaparte, availing himself of the bill passed by congress for a conditional repeal of the non-importation act, declared that the Berlin and Milan decrees, as far as they affected America, should cease to operate on the first of November: the president accordingly issued a proclamation, on the seventh of that month, discontinuing all restrictions relating to France and her dependences; with a professed determination, that if Great Britain did not revoke her orders in council by the second of February, the interdict would be enforced against her. This appeared a gloomy picture; yet it was relieved by some gleams of light: England still had the uncontrolled dominion of the sea; her colonial power went on increasing; and whenever her fleets could co-operate with her military forces, success generally attended her banners. In the beginning of July, Murat collected a large armament on the coast of Calabria, for the invasion of Sicily: after many skirmishes between his flotilla and that prepared by sir John Stuart to resist him, in which great numbers of Neapolitan vessels were taken or destroyed, he succeeded in throwing on shore a force of about 3500 men near the Faro point; but, not being properly supported, 900 of them were taken prisoners by general Campbell, and the rest driven for shelter to their vessels. With similar success, the island of Anholt, in the Baltic, was defended by captain Maurice with 380 men, against a Danish force of nearly 3000, which landed there on the twenty-third of March. In the list of our conquests was that of Santa Maura, added to the other Ionian islands rescued from French dominion: the Dutch settlements of Amboyna, and Banda, the principal of

CHAP.
LL

1810.

their spice islands, surrendered to our arms; as also did the isles of Bourbon and Mauritius, which had long afforded shelter to French privateers, to the great injury of our East Indian commerce: in the latter island, an immense quantity of stores and valuable merchandise, five large frigates, some smaller ships of war, and twenty-eight merchantmen, beside two British captured East Indiamen, were taken by the conquerors. In the West Indies, the important island of Gaudaloupe, the last colonial possession of France, surrendered to a combined naval and military force under admiral sir Alexander Cochrane and lieutenant-general Beckwith; the latter of whom commanded an army of about 6000 men, divided into five brigades: by the prompt and judicious operations of these several corps, when a landing had been effected, the enemy was driven from all the positions he had occupied: having then compressed his forces, he retired to an apparently impregnable situation, beyond the bridge of Nozière, which was broken down. The spot chosen for defence was of a triangular shape, two sides being deep ravines; but the base consisted of a mountainous and woody ridge, the intricate passes of which were strongly guarded. The great obstacle to the British, in the way of farther proceedings, was the passage of the river Noire, which ran down the ravine in front of the enemy: sir George Beckwith therefore determined not to hazard an attack in that quarter, but rather on the flank of his opponents, notwithstanding all the obstructions which nature and art presented to this manœuvre. Accordingly, brigadier-general Wake, who commanded the reserve, was ordered to carry his brigade by night over the hills, for the purpose of turning the enemy's left: this order however had scarcely been given, when the general met with a man who had long been accustomed to hunt in those mountains, and who offered, at the risk of his life, to guide the troops by a path too intricate to be attempted in the dark, but which would bring them on the enemy's flank in two hours. There now remained only one hour and a half to sunset: no time was to be

lost in sending to the commander in chief, whose route, laid down for the reserve, required five hours; while general Wale from his position could see the British left already engaged with the enemy; whence it was clear to him, that the French left could not be reinforced in less time than was required for his march. In this situation he adopted the resolution of a firm, vigorous, and patriotic mind: risking all personal consequences that might ensue from disobedience of orders, he instantly began his march; carried his brigade through the most intricate passes in the time specified; and, after a short, but severe conflict, drove in the enemy, and gained the strong post which laid them open to an attack in flank and rear. The French commander was so confounded at seeing the heights occupied by British troops, that he sent a flag of truce, and surrendered the whole island without farther contest: brigadier Wale was wounded in this service; and sir George Beckwith, in general orders, bore honorable testimony to the zeal and ability with which he had conducted his operations. In the same month, St. Eustace and St. Martin were also taken; and nothing more was left in this part of the world for British arms to conquer.

CHAP.
LI.
1810.

In Spain and Portugal, though the political horizon was still gloomy, some indications of a brighter day appeared: a reaction against the power of imbecile and selfish juntas had become visible; while lord Wellington, who had given proofs of consummate talent and exemplary discretion, acquired an ally among the British ministers, in the person of his brother, from whose enlightened views and active co-operation he anticipated the happiest results. It is now time to resume our detail of operations in the peninsula, for the conquest of which Bonaparte this year made extraordinary exertions.

Affairs of
Spain.

After the battle of Ocaña, the French under Soult, assisted by Victor and Mortier, and accompanied by the king in person, advanced into the south of Spain: having, on the twentieth of January, penetrated the

CHAP.
LI.

1810.

passes of the Sierra Morena, almost without resistance, they established their head quarters at Baylen.

Sebastiani overran Grenada, and took possession of Malaga : Seville surrendered to Victor on the tenth of February ; the supreme junta, assembled there, having previously retired to the isle de Leon, on the extreme point of which stands the city of Cadiz. This last refuge of Spanish independence had been exposed to great danger through vacillation or treachery ; and it was saved by a remarkably rapid march of the duke of Albuquerque, one of the few Spanish generals, to whom their country is indebted for good service in her time of danger. This nobleman, at the head of 8000 men, retreated from Utrera, when he saw that Seville must fall ; and on his arrival at Cadiz, he found that the junta, who were strongly suspected of a design to make terms with Joseph, had been deposed, and the supreme authority invested in a regency : vigorous preparations were then made for defence ; all persons capable of bearing arms were enrolled ; British troops were called in from Lisbon and Gibraltar ; while the Spanish fleet, amounting to twenty sail of the line, was moored in the harbor, under the direction of admiral Purvis, who also brought in the British squadron. French troops occupied the whole circuit of the bay, endeavoring to annoy the shipping and town ; but not venturing a regular attack on the isle of Leon : they however took fort Matagorda, situated on the opposite side of the harbor, about two miles from Cadiz, after it had been bravely defended two months by a body of British soldiers and sailors. In Catalonia, the Spanish general, O'Donnel, who had collected a considerable force for the purpose of raising the siege of Hostalric, was defeated on the plain of Vich ; and, after a brave resistance of four months, the castle of Hostalric was taken ; by which the French secured a communication between Gerona and Barcelona : in June, they captured the important fortresses of Lerida and Mequinenza ; but Tortosa, which was next besieged, did not surrender before the commencement of the following year.

Valencia, for the surprise of which a plan was concerted between Suchet and some traitors within the city, was defended by general Caro, who marched out against the enemy, and defeated them with great slaughter: in the south, 6000 French, stationed at Ronda, were surprised by a detachment from Algesiras, under general Lacy; and fled in disorder, leaving their arms and ammunition, which were distributed among the mountaineers. The spirit of resistance spreading to the frontiers of Murcia, Sebastiani was ordered into that province; where he compelled the Spaniards to retire to Alicante: an expedition undertaken against Malaga, in October, proved unsuccessful; and lord Blaney, who commanded our troops, was taken prisoner.

In Galicia and the Asturias, war was carried on with various success, by the Spanish generals, Porlier, Mahi, and Renovales, assisted by a squadron of British frigates stationed at Corunna; sir Home Popham being sent by the British government to direct the naval, and general Walker the military department. Various expeditions from Corunna increased the audacity of the guerilla forces, which frequently united in numbers sufficient to attack large French detachments with such success, that lord Liverpool became anxious to employ a corps of 4000 British troops to secure Santona, which had the best winter harbor on the coast: but when he consulted Wellington, that sagacious commander dissuaded him from the project, declaring that it was vain to hope for assistance even in this way from the Spaniards. 'The first thing,' said he, 'which they would require, would be money; then arms, ammunition, clothing, provisions, horses, forage, and every thing which the expedition ought to demand from them; and after all, this extraordinary and perverse people would scarcely allow its commander to have a voice in the plan of operations to be followed, when the whole were ready to undertake any; if indeed they ever should be ready.' Meanwhile, Napoleon caused Caffarelli's reserve to enter Spain, ordered Santona to be fortified, and directed other

CHAP.
LI.

1810.

reinforcements to these provinces; sending marshal Bessières to command the army of the north, which at the end of the year exceeded 70,000 men. The army of the centre amounted to 27,000, exclusive of the French and Spanish guards, and the *juramentados*, or native troops, which had taken the oath of allegiance to Joseph: with this force, the new monarch protected his court, watched the movements of the Valencians, and checked incursions of the *partidas*. In Andalusia, Seville was the chief point of French defence; Cadiz that of attack: in this latter city, the national Cortes at length met, and the long suppressed voice of the people was now heard: but the hopes, which had been thus excited, ended in disappointment.

Having assumed the lofty title of majesty, this assembly declared the press free, except in matters of religion; abolished some of the provincial juntas; re-appointed captains-general, and proceeded to form a constitution worded in the spirit of republican freedom: but these abstract principles of liberty were not what the Spanish nation desired; national pride and religious influence were the main-springs of its action; and the Cortes, in suppressing old establishments, and violating old forms, wounded various interests, created powerful enemies, and shocked those very prejudices which produced resistance to Napoleon: at the same time, in the administration of civil and military affairs, procrastination, intrigue, folly, and violence were still predominant; and though there was no cordial union among any parties in acting against the common enemy; yet, with respect to the colonies, which had contributed 90,000,000 of dollars to the support of the war, all agreed to push violence, injustice, and impolicy to the utmost limits. The manner in which those transatlantic provinces were governed by the mother country had long been a subject of much discontent; but the treatment which they had lately experienced from the regency, by the tyrannical suppression of their direct trade with Great Britain one month after it had been allowed, tended greatly to increase their dissatisfaction: when the Cortes met, they expected

more justice; but as soon as the colonial rights were agitated in that assembly, eternal slavery was declared to be the only lot adapted to persons, whom these proud and bigoted Spaniards would scarcely acknowledge as belonging to the great family of mankind. 'The Americans complain of having been tyrannised over for three hundred years! they shall now suffer for three thousand years.'—'We know not to what class of beast the Americans belong.' Such, says colonel Napier, were the expressions heard and applauded in the Cortes, when the rights of the colonists were agitated in that assembly.⁸

The rising spirit of liberty first manifested itself in the province of Caraccas, where the magistrates were deposed, and a provisional junta was formed for conducting the government on principles of fraternisation and unity with the mother country, though with the expectation of ultimate independence: other provinces soon followed the example; and, on the nineteenth of April, the confederacy of Venezuela was formed. Having been declared traitors, their ports were blockaded, until they should acknowledge the authority of the regency at Cadiz, as the legitimate representatives of Ferdinand VII.; though the colonists affirmed, that the central junta had no right to appoint a regency before the assembling of the Cortes: at the same time, the promise of an amnesty was held out for what had passed, on condition of future obedience. Two parties now arose in Spanish America; the loyalists, who submitted to the regency; and the independents, who insisted on governing themselves: king Joseph endeavored to form a third, but met with no success. The junta of Caraccas opened a correspondence with the British government, through that of Curaçoa: but lord Liverpool, in his reply, observed, 'that, under obligations of justice and good faith, his Britannic majesty must discourage every attempt to separate the Spanish provinces in America from the mother country: yet if Spain should be condemned to submit to the yoke of the common enemy, every assistance should be given

⁸ Napier, vol. iii. p. 420.

CHAP.
LI.

1810.

to those provinces in rendering them independent of that power, and obtaining in them an asylum for such Spaniards as should disdain to submit to their oppressors; where they might preserve the remains of the monarchy for their lawful sovereign, should he ever recover his liberty.' Providence however in his mercy decreed otherwise; and Spanish America has not been cursed with the aid of Great Britain to rivet on its people the leaden fetters of a despotism which was perhaps unexampled among nations: many indeed are the miseries these colonists have undergone; many more also it will be their fate to undergo, before they have worked out their freedom, and cleared away corruptions engendered by ages of tyranny and misrule: but these evils are transitory: they will pass off like fogs and exhalations from the purified atmosphere; and their latest posterity will have cause to rejoice, that no British cabinet had the power of bringing their country again under the yoke of a Bourbon dynasty.

Several months had now elapsed since the French resumed their schemes of conquest, interrupted by the Austrian war and British movements; routing the Spanish armies, dispersing their scattered troops, and subduing fortress after fortress, until all solid resistance was gone, and no hope of deliverance remained for the peninsula, except what rested on the English general. That distinguished chief, when he had freed his operations from the wretched influence of Spanish juntas, retired to undertake the defence of Portugal against the whole power of France; but not without a cautious estimate of all the difficulties and chances of success in a country, the face of which he had viewed with the eye of a skilful tactician. Soon after the fatal battle of Ocaña, he repaired to Seville, where he met his brother, the marquis Wellesley, and held several conferences with the Spanish government: he next entered into correspondence with the cabinet at home, the members of which were so fully satisfied of the practicability of his schemes, that they determined to support him: but as the dreadful loss of men occasioned by the Walcheren expedition pro-

hibited them from sending any reinforcement of troops for the present, they agreed to take 10,000 more of the Portuguese into British pay; and thus, pledging themselves to an annual subsidy of nearly £1,000,000, they justly required, under pain of stopping such a supply, that the Portuguese regency should effectively keep up that part of the military establishment which remained under their own direction.

CHAP.
LI.
1810.

When Wellington moved his troops from the banks of the Guadiana, he placed the greater part of them in healthy and comfortable quarters along the valley of the Mondego; expecting a reinforcement of 5000 infantry, and a cavalry regiment from England: on the twentieth of January his head quarters were at Viseu; general Hill being left with 10,000 men, half British and half Portuguese, at Abrantes, in order to watch Badajos, and protect Lisbon, as well as the right flank of the British army: the head quarters of marshal Beresford were at Thomar; in which place, and its neighboring villages, the Portuguese troops were stationed.

Campaign
in Portugal.

In the mean time, the French movements were again under the direction of Napoleon; and not Andalusia only, but every part of the peninsula was destined to feel his influence. Fresh troops, flushed with their late victories in Germany, were inundating Spain, and pursuing the track of the old legions, while the latter were impelled forward in the career of invasion: yet, even under these circumstances, the British general meditated a forward movement into Castile, in order to threaten the rear of Joseph's army, and force him to desist from his attack on Andalusia: he well knew how fast recruits for the French armies were pouring into the country, though the junta had assured him that they amounted only to 8000 men; but he was obliged to relinquish his design, because his own reinforcements did not arrive from England before those of his opponents came into line; because the Portuguese troops had suffered such hardships during the winter, that to put them forward would be to risk their total disorganisation; and because marshal Mor-

CHAP.
LI.

1810.

tier had brought up his division against Badajos; so that the removal of general Hill's force from Abrantes would have exposed the right flank of the British army to imminent danger. The invasion of Andalusia was soon discovered to be only part of a general movement: exclusive of the army which forced the Sierra Morena, three corps, the sixth, second, and fifth, amounting to 50,000 men, might have united to oppose the British advance; while 100,000 victorious troops, rendered disposable by the peace of Vienna, were crossing the Pyrenees: of these, a complete division, under Junot, was already arrived in the plains of Valladolid; and would, in conjunction with Kellerman, have overwhelmed our army, but for that sagacity which the French, with derisive but natural anger, and the Spaniards with ignorance and ingratitude, termed, 'the selfish caution of the English system.'⁴

Henceforward lord Wellington turned his whole attention to Portugal; against which country, before the end of May, the French brought an army, amounting to near 87,000 men of all arms, under the chief command of Massena; while the ninth corps, of 24,000, under Drouet, was arranged for its support, along the great line of communication from Vittoria to Valladolid; and a division of more than 10,000, under general Serras, was employed as a moveable column to protect its rear: beside these troops, the French army of the south, under Soult, consisted of 73,000 men; that of the centre, under Joseph, reckoned 24,000; and about 144,000 were distributed, under Macdonald, Suchet, and other able commanders, in the various governments. To oppose this mighty force, the Spaniards had little except their *partidas*, or irregular bands; which, though extremely annoying to the French, would have soon disappeared under the stern system of Napoleon, had they not been supported by the presence of British armies, to which eventually they became extremely serviceable.

In Portugal however, strange to say, lord Welling-

⁴ Napier, vol. iii. p. 232.

ton was met by innumerable obstacles, similar to those which he had experienced in Spain. There were three principal parties in the country: that of the great mass of the people, ready to undergo every extremity for independence; that of the disaffected, who expected an ameliorated government if the French should be successful; and that of the *fidalgos*, or nobles, who hoped to profit by the energies of the nation, without any diminution of their privileges, or of the abuses of government. These latter were a powerful body, acting in co-operation with a regency as corrupt and imbecile as the supreme junta of Spain: at their head was that furious and bigoted priest, the bishop of Oporto, who had lately been raised to the dignity of patriarch: his colleagues, the Monteiro Mor, and the marquis of Das Minas, were jealous of each other; but, like their chief, unanimous in support of abuses: insomuch that the re-organisation of the army, carried on by marshal Beresford, was so hateful to those who profited by its former state, that Das Minas resigned in disgust, and became a centre round which the disaffected of all parties rallied: four new members were then added to the regency; of whom, the first, Antonio, commonly called Principal Souza, was a daring unprincipled intriguer, who, in league with the patriarch, sought every opportunity to thwart our commanders. Thus, as colonel Napier observes, an exceedingly powerful cabal was formed, whose object was to obtain the supreme direction of civil and military affairs, controlling both Wellington and Beresford; and while the chevalier Souza, brother of the principal, was envoy at the court of London, another, Don Pedro de Souza, in the same capacity near the Spanish regency, and the conde Linhares, head of the family, prime minister in the Brazils, their dangerous intrigues were supported with a high hand by the cabinet of Rio Janeiro.⁵ To counteract and overcome the machinations of this cabal, gave lord Wellington, for a long time, more trouble than to beat the French: perhaps they would have been too much even for his

CHAP.
LI.
1810.
Difficulties
of lord
Wellington.

⁵ Napier, vol. iii. p. 250.

powerful mind, distracted as it was by other cares; had it not fortunately happened that Canning's envoy, Mr. Villiers, was superseded by Charles Stuart, just at the time when consummate experience in the affairs of the peninsula, aided by a resolute temper, was absolutely necessary to support the commander-in-chief. Having required and obtained, as marshal-general of Portugal, an authority over the forces independent of the local government, Wellington called on the regency to revive the ancient military laws, by which the whole male population was to be enrolled and bear arms: this effected, he demanded that the people should be ordered to lay waste the country, on whatever line the enemy might penetrate: but, knowing that he had to oppose the finest armies of France with a small British force, before the discipline and valor of his Portuguese allies could be ascertained, he conceived the grand design, of turning the mountains that cross the neck of land on which Lisbon is situated, into an impregnable citadel, to receive the defenders of the peninsula, if they should be obliged to retire before the overwhelming masses of its invaders. Knowing also the uncertainty of war, and the dangers of an encounter with 80,000 veterans of France, lord Wellington prepared a second and a third line of intrenchments; whilst a large fleet of transports was constantly kept in the river, for the reception, not only of British and Portuguese forces, but such of the citizens also as might wish to embark. It then remained to organise a method of supplies for his army in a country almost exhausted of provisions; and, lastly, to consider attentively every line of operation on which the enemy might advance, in order to obstruct his movements. Such were some of the difficulties that surrounded this second Marlborough; such the intricate combinations which engaged his mighty mind, when he undertook to renew the ancient glories of his country, tarnished by recent failures on the continent.

The British army, distributed into five divisions, was thus disposed in the beginning of the campaign:

the first division of 6000 men under general Spencer was stationed at Viseu; the second under general Hill at Abrantes; the third of 3000 under general Picton at Celerico; the fourth of 4000 under general Cole at Guarda; and the light division of 2400 under general Robert Craufurd at Pinhel; while 3000 cavalry under sir Stapleton Cotton were ranged along the valley of the Mondego; the whole number under arms being not more than 23,400; to this however must be added about 20,000 Portuguese regulars at Thomar, 5000 at Abrantes, and the militia with the *ordenança*, that formed a kind of defence at the wings of lord Wellington's line.

The early movements of the French were vague, and their projects obscure: while Mortier menaced Badajos, Ney summoned Ciudad Rodrigo; and Loison advanced against Astorga, from which place he was repulsed. Junot, with the eighth corps, then meditated its siege, but was suddenly called toward Madrid to repress any disorders that might occur in the king's absence; while Kellerman advanced to Alba de Tormes; and detachments from his force, and that of Ney, chased the Spanish general, Carrera, from the Gata and Bejar mountains. The invasion of Portugal by the northern line was not yet finally arranged: whatever designs might have been contemplated, they were frustrated, partly by the insurrection in Grenada and the failure of Suchet in Valencia, partly by dissension among the leaders in the absence of Napoleon. When the commotions in the south subsided, Junot returned into Old Castile; and, having established communications between himself and Ney, invested Astorga, which fell after a gallant resistance on the night of the twenty-first of April. During this siege, the sixth corps was concentrated at Salamanca; a detachment sent by Kellerman seized the pass of Baños; and a strong battering train arrived at Salamanca. The grand operations were now commencing; the whole line of communication with France swarmed with living masses; and a report arose that the emperor himself was on the way to head his armies:

CHAP.
LL.

1810.

the emperor however was bound at Paris by the silken fetters of Hymen; but Massena, the highest in rank among his marshals, a stranger also to those petty intrigues and jealousies which had hitherto obstructed the French conquests, was selected to be the representative of Napoleon; and his authority was made absolute in the northern provinces of Spain. Having repaired to Madrid for the purpose of conferring with the king, he there decided on the northern line of invasion; and, during his residence in the capital, he sent instructions to marshal Ney to undertake the siege of Ciudad Rodrigo.

On the twenty-sixth of April this place was invested by about 25,000 French troops: the garrison amounted to 6000 fighting men, beside the citizens; and the veteran Don Andreas Herrasti, its governor, was one of the few Spanish officers worthy of their country's best days. The British head-quarters were now removed to Celerico; the garrison naturally looked for assistance; and the allied forces were eager for the contest; but no demonstration was made to co-operate with the besieged. Lord Wellington has been censured for this inactivity; as disregarding, with a worse than stoical indifference, the sufferings of his allies, and the taunts of his enemies. Let the detractors of this great general attend to an observation made at the time by one, who seems fully to have entered into the profound views of his distinguished commander. 'If,' said general Picton, 'we attempt to relieve this place, the French will drive us out of Portugal; while, if they get possession of it, they will lose time, which is of more importance to them than Ciudad Rodrigo.'⁶ At this period also, lord Wellington's operations were so cramped by the scandalous conduct of the Portuguese regency, who kept back all the resources of their country, that it was not without great difficulty he could maintain his position on the frontier. Their conduct was exactly similar to that which he had experienced from the Spanish junta in his advance on Talavera; and his remonstrances

⁶ Life of Picton, vol. i. p. 283.

were treated with the same contemptuous indifference and neglect: but feeling himself here to be in a different relative situation, he wrote in a severe and menacing style to those traitors; by which means alone he procured some relief for his troops. How different might have been the result of this campaign, if Massena, despising the small Spanish garrison left in the rear of his immense army, had pressed boldly on, while Regnier had taken Hill's division in flank! Well might the emperor, when he deliberately criticised operations at St. Helena, declare that his lieutenant had violated the essential rules of offensive warfare!⁷

Lord Wellington's capacious and reflective mind had at this time taken an anticipated view, not only of the present campaign, but of the whole peninsular war: he had now become acquainted with the character and resources both of his allies and of his antagonists; and he was well aware that one or two victories on his own side could not decide the contest, while a single defeat might at once bring it to a conclusion. Not all the wiles of his antagonist therefore could induce him to hazard an engagement: but in order to keep up the animation of his troops, he permitted general Craufurd, one of the most daring and impetuous spirits of the age, to commence a series of operations with his light division; giving him however strict injunctions not to pass the Coa, and not to bring on a general action. With 4000 infantry, 1100 cavalry, and six guns, this enterprising officer executed a brilliant series of manœuvres, within a few hours' march of the grand French army; defeating many detachments, especially of cavalry; and cutting up the resources of the country, which he appropriated to the sustenance of his own troops. His division was at the same time in so perfect a state of discipline, that the whole would, when any occasion offered itself, form in order of battle, with the baggage packed in the rear, in less than a quarter of an hour.

In the mean time, Ciudad Rodrigo, left to its fate, held out nobly till the first of July; when Massena, Capture of Ciudad Rodrigo by the French.

⁷ 'Il n'avait pas raisonné son opération,' was the expression.

CHAP.
LI.

1810.

sensible that Ney's mode of attack was faulty, made some alterations which soon brought all the outward defences of the place into his possession; and on the ninth, so terrible a fire was opened on the town itself, that the Spanish guns were nearly silenced, and a wide breach was visible in the wall. 'At this moment,' says colonel Napier, 'three French soldiers, of heroic courage, suddenly running out of the ranks, mounted the breach; looked into the town; and, having thus proved the state of the works, discharged their muskets, and retired unhurt to their comrades: the columns of assault immediately assembled; and the troops, animated by this example, as well as by the presence of Ney, were impatient for the signal. A few moments would have sent them raging into the midst of the city; when a white flag waved on the rampart, and the venerable governor was seen standing alone on the ruins, and signifying by his gestures that he desired to capitulate: he had stricken manfully, while reason warranted hope; and it was no dishonor to his silver hairs, that he surrendered when resistance could only lead to massacre and devastation.'⁸

Soon after the fall of this place, Craufurd, who had ventured to depart from his commander's general instructions so far as to pass the Coa, brought on a combat between his division and a superior force; by which he was driven across a bridge over that river, and pursued by the enemy: there however his troops made a gallant stand, and the French lost more than 1000 men; the slaughter at the bridge being dreadful to behold: the general then made good his retreat behind the Pinhel, with a loss of forty-four Portuguese, and 272 British killed, wounded, or missing; among whom were twenty-eight officers.

Massena pushed some troops over the Coa for the purpose of cutting off all communication between the

* If the wretched Ferdinand had possessed a soul removed one degree above the brute creation, he would have employed artists to delineate this and other instances of heroic valor, in his subjects, instead of using his own royal fingers to embroider petticoats for the Virgin. Such noble representations would have adorned the walls of the Escorial quite as well as the figures of tortured saints, or the loves of heathen deities.

allies and Almeida: on the twenty-seventh of July these reached the Pinhel; and the British army was drawn back to a more concentrated position, where it remained several days anxiously watching the movements of the enemy: on the third of August, however, the French retired again behind the Coa; but Wellington could not be induced to alter his plans: so that when Massena, after much dilatory proceeding, invested Almeida, colonel Cox the governor, was left with a garrison of about 4000 men, to make the best defence in his power. On the eighteenth, the trenches were begun under cover of a false attack; and on the twenty-sixth, the second parallel being completed, sixty-five pieces of artillery, mounted in ten batteries, opened on the place: the counter fire however was briskly kept up, and little serious damage was sustained; but just after dark, treason or an accidental shell caused an explosion in the magazines, which not only reduced the town to ruins, with an enormous destruction of life, but dismounted the guns, and breached the rampart. Colonel Cox, hoping that the British army might relieve him, and knowing the importance of delay, would still have refused the enemy's demand to surrender, had he not been betrayed by his Portuguese officers, at the head of whom was Bernardo Costa, lieutenant-governor of the fortress, who was afterwards brought to trial by marshal Beresford, and shot as a traitor.

As soon as lord Wellington became acquainted with the fall of Almeida, he ordered the army to fall back behind the Mondego; but still a considerable degree of inertness pervaded the operations of his antagonist: he hesitated to advance, seeming either disinclined to commence the invasion, or undecided as to the mode of conducting it: he already experienced great difficulty in feeding his men, who by depredation and cruelty had rendered the inhabitants in their rear implacable enemies; nor could supplies be easily sent from other parts of Spain, on account of the guerilla bands, whose knowledge of the country was so perfect, that they were able to destroy an escort with very

CHAP.
LI.

1810.

little risk to themselves. Massena also waited till he could be assured of the co-operation of Regnier; and that general suddenly appeared at Sabugul on the first of September, threatening to advance on Guarda, and turn the right of the British; while the French cavalry actually attacked its piquets in front: Wellington then drew his infantry behind Celerico, and fixed his cavalry at that place, with posts of observation at Guarda and Trancoso. It appeared to be the French general's design at this time to advance into Portugal by three different routes, on the lines of Pinhel, Alverca, and Guarda; but, suddenly changing the plan which his demonstrations indicated, he now concentrated his forces, and commenced a rapid march along the right bank of the Mondego, in the hope of securing Coimbra, before the junction of Hill's corps, no longer under the necessity of watching Regnier, should enable Wellington to offer effectual resistance. The road selected by Massena for his advance was so full of natural impediments, as to be considered almost impracticable; but had he determined to take that on the left bank, by which his antagonist was now retiring, he must previously have encountered the British army in the strong passes of the Estrella, a mountain-chain extending from the Tagus to the Mondego; he therefore chose the road northward of this river. In the mean time, reports of the French advance created such a panic in the capital, and such a false coloring was given to all the British operations by its infamous regency, that our commander was under the necessity of remonstrating severely with that body on the nature of their proceedings; declaring, 'that unless a stop was put to their miserable intrigues, he would advise his own government to withdraw its army.' So mischievous indeed had these proceedings been, that the tract of country between the Mondego and the lines at Torres Vedras still contained provision sufficient to support the French during the ensuing winter; and the people were unprepared to expect an enemy, or to attempt a removal of their property: his only choice therefore lay between stopping the invaders

on the Mondego, or laying waste the country as he retreated, and driving the wretched inhabitants before him to the shelter of his lines: the consequences of defeat would have been so dreadful, and the probability of it was so great, when the *matériel* of the enemy's army was compared with that of his own, that prudence obliged his lordship to take the latter course; though he knew how his actions would be misrepresented by the violent faction which opposed all his measures, and was ready to inflame the public mind against all his counsels.

Having come to this determination, he lost no time in retreating; so that he might take every advantage over his advancing foes. As they proceeded with great labor and difficulty along the right bank of the Mondego, he kept a parallel line with their march; and being less encumbered, he so far outstripped them, that by an able and rapid manœuvre during the twentieth and twenty-first of September, he crossed the river, and took up a position in their front, on the Sierra de Busaco. This mountain, about eight miles in length, and abutting on the Mondego, is connected with the Sierra de Caramula by a rugged tract almost impervious to the march of an army: its face is rough, steep, and fit for defence; while the approach to a position taken on its crest is very unfavorable to an attacking army. When this formidable post was occupied, some British officers expressed their fears that Massena would not assail it: lord Wellington thought otherwise; and his ready answer was, 'but if he does, I shall beat him.'⁹ Massena, ignorant respecting the nature of the country, was misled by reports; nor was he a man likely to be deterred by the first difficulty that opposed his progress.

General Hill had not yet joined the British army with his division, and Leith's corps was still engaged in passing the river: consequently, it is possible, that if the French had made their attack instantly, they might have forced the pass; but Massena was not on

⁹ Napier, vol. iii. p. 324.

CHAP.
 LL

1810..

the spot, and Ney was unwilling to risk a battle on his own responsibility: the favorable moment therefore was lost; and by the twenty-sixth our army was concentrated in its strong position, covered in front by steep precipices and pathless defiles: on the twenty-fourth, the enemy appeared in force, and skirmished with the British piquets in front of Mortagao; while a party of their cavalry received a severe check from the fourteenth dragoons. Early on the twenty-fifth, the impetuous Craufurd moved down from his post, and seemed disposed to renew the scene of the Coa; when the enemy came on so rapidly, that Wellington himself was obliged to interfere, and cover the retreat of the light division: all his energy and skill was required to prevent its being seriously engaged: 'howbeit,' says colonel Napier, 'a series of rapid and beautiful movements, a sharp cannonade, and an hour's march, brought every thing back, in good order, to the great position; but almost at the same moment, the opposite ridge was crowned by the masses of the sixth corps; and the French batteries opened, as the English troops mounted the steep ascent on which the convent was situated.'

Ney was now anxious to make an immediate onset; but Massena was ten miles in the rear at Mortagao, and the only favorable opportunity of success was lost; for the troops of general Leith were but now crossing the river, general Hill's division had not closed up, and only 25,000 men were in line on a sierra extending eight miles. On the twenty-sixth, both Ney and Regnier wrote to the prince of Essling, intimating their desire to attack: every thing however was to await his arrival; and he did not reach the field till noon, bringing with him the eighth corps: but the situation of his opponents was greatly altered; the whole sierra was glittering with bayonets, the troops posted in the most advantageous positions, the mountain sides covered with skirmishers, and fifty pieces of artillery placed among projecting rocks, which in some instances formed natural batteries. Ney was now

averse to attack; but Massena was resolved, if possible, to force the British position, relying on the numbers, valor, and discipline of his troops.

CHAP.
 LL.
 1810.

Very early on the morning of the twenty-seventh, the French columns were put in motion; three, under Ney, opposite to the convent; and two, under Reginier, against the pass of St. Antonio de Cantara, the defence of which was principally entrusted to the third division, commanded by general Picton. At this latter post, a short time before dawn, a sharp fire of musketry was heard; and soon afterwards fourteen pieces of cannon opened from an opposite height, to cover the advance of a heavy column as it attempted to force the defile: but so incessant a fire was kept up on their flank by the light corps of the division, the seventy-fourth regiment, and a Portuguese battalion in front, that no efforts could succeed; and they were ultimately compelled to retire in great confusion. During the most critical period, however, a strong column penetrated on the left of the division close to the hill of Busacos, which was occupied by the eighty-eighth, and four companies of the forty-fifth: the combat here was very unequal; and the enemy, having gained the rocky heights, was on the point of securing the position, when Picton, leaving the defence of the pass to colonel Mackinnon, galloped toward the left, where he found the eighty-eighth, and the light companies of the seventy-fourth, retiring in disorder before the overwhelming masses: with some difficulty he succeeded in rallying those troops; when the gallant major Smith, placing himself at their head, made a desperate charge on the foe; while Picton himself headed a battalion of the eighth Portuguese regiment, brought up by major Birmingham at a very critical moment: this joint attack was eminently successful; the French, fatigued by previous efforts, were driven over the rocks; and down they went headlong, leaving the mountain side strewn with carcasses and arms. On Picton's return to the pass, he found it resolutely maintained; and when Leith's brigade advanced to his assistance, he ordered it to march on by the rear

CHAP.
LI.

1810.

toward the left, where it arrived in time to join five companies of the forty-fifth under lieutenant-colonel Mead, and the eighth Portuguese regiment under lieutenant-colonel Douglas, in repelling the last attempt of the enemy at that point.¹⁰

Ney's attack on the light division, farther to the left, had no better success: the ascent here was even more steep and dangerous than the pass which had foiled Regnier; while Craufurd had made a masterly disposition of his forces.

The French marshal pushed forward two divisions of the sixth corps, the one under Loison, and the other commanded by Marchand; himself keeping the third in reserve: the first of these, headed by general Simon's brigade, ascended the mountain with astonishing celerity, though penetrated from front to rear by shot from colonel Ross's artillery, and plied incessantly by musketry from the light troops: their impetuosity however could not be withstood; the British skirmishers rushed back over the edge of the summit, the artillery was withdrawn, and cries of victory were heard from the advancing columns: at this moment Craufurd, who had been intently watching the progress of the attack, ordered the forty-third and fifty-second regiments, that were concealed from view by the hollow ground, to advance: a loud shout startled their assailants, among whom a close volley was poured with terrible effect: a rapid charge, which followed, sent 1000 British bayonets over the brow of the mountain; when 'the enemy, unable to retreat, and afraid to resist, were rolled down the steep like a torrent of hailstones urged by a tempestuous wind.'¹¹ the main body of the British refrained from pursuit; but several companies, which descended after the fugitives, were driven back by the reserve. Marchand's division, which followed the main road, broke into masses; gained a pine wood half-way up the mountain; and sent the light troops toward the highest part: but the difficulty of ascent was so great, that general Pack

¹⁰ Life of Picton, vol. i. p. 252.

¹¹ Lord Londonderry's History of the Peninsular War.

held the enemy in check; the guards, about half a mile higher up, under general Spencer, cut off all hope of success; and the fire of Craufurd's artillery, after the defeat of Loison, flanked the main body of the French in the pine wood. Ney, who was there in person, having sustained the murderous contest for an hour, finally retired; and thus, after prodigious efforts of valor, and a loss of near 5000 men in killed and wounded, the French were unable to force this position, the defence of which cost the allied forces not more than 1300: the Portuguese troops behaved so well in this action, that the commander-in-chief declared them worthy of contending in the same ranks with British soldiers.

CHAP.
LI.
1810.

As it was expected that Massena would renew his attempt on the twenty-eighth, every preparation was made in the British line to give him another warm reception; but the result of yesterday's conflict had taught him a severe lesson; and by means of a peasant, he had discovered a pass through the Sierra de Caramula, on the British left, leading into the high road to Coimbra, by which the position might be turned: through this defile the French commander hoped to reach that place before lord Wellington; and to cover his movement, the skirmishing was renewed with great vigor and activity; nor was this project apparent before evening, when the enemy's masses in front were sensibly diminished, and his cavalry descried winding over the distant mountains: Hill's division then crossed the Mondego, to retire on Thomar; while the centre and left wing defiled in the night along the other roads on Milheada, in the route to Coimbra. Massena vainly hoped, by a rapid movement, to reach this city before the British army; on the first of October he attacked its outposts, and drove them from the hills bounding the plain of Coimbra to the north; a skirmish of cavalry took place, in which fifty or sixty fell on both sides, and some of our men were cut down in the very midst of the river: this obliged the light division, which formed the rear-guard, to move hastily through the city, in order to gain the

CHAP.
LL

1810.

defiles of Condeixa; and then ensued one of the most dreadful scenes of distress witnessed during this cruel war. The vile regency had neglected to enforce lord Wellington's instructions; and the people had neither driven away their cattle, nor moved their corn and other property, nor destroyed their mills: deceived by their own vain hopes, they remained till the rapid advance of the enemy, and the sudden retreat of the allies, left them no time for preparation, and very little for escape. 'Then,' says lord Londonderry, 'a crowd of men, women, and children, of the sick, the aged, and the infirm, as well as the young and robust, covered the roads and fields in every direction: mothers might be seen, with infants at their breasts, hurrying toward the capital, and weeping as they went; old men, scarcely able to totter along, made their way, chiefly by the aid of sons and daughters; while the whole road soon became strewed with bedding, blankets, and other species of household furniture, which the weary fugitives were unable to carry farther.'

At the entrance of the bridge the press was so great, that our troops were obliged to halt for a few moments just under the prison: the jailer had fled with the keys; and the prisoners, crowding to the windows, were endeavoring to tear down the bars with their hands, and even with their teeth, bellowing in the most frightful manner; while the bitter lamentations of the multitude increased, and the pistol shots of the cavalry engaged at the ford were heard. Captain William Campbell, an officer on Craufurd's staff, broke open the prison doors, while the troops forced a passage over the bridge; but the defiles beyond it were so crowded, that no effort could make a way, even for the artillery; and if a single regiment of French infantry had come up, all must have been destroyed: at last, a passage was opened on the right flank for the guns; but it was nearly dark when the division reached Condeixa: head quarters were that night at Redinha, and next day at Leiria: both at this place, and at Condeixa, the troops began to plunder, and all the disorders of a retreat had already commenced;

but three men, taken in the fact at Leiria, were hanged on the spot; and other vigorous measures restored order, while a contrary line of conduct, pursued by Massena, was very injurious to the discipline of his troops: the utmost license was permitted to them at Coimbra; and the time so wasted, from the first to the fourth of October, destroyed every advantage gained by their rapid march.

CHAP.
II.
1810.

The prince of Essling had scarcely quitted the city, when Trant, Miller, and Wilson, whose independent corps always hovered round the contending armies, closed on his rear; occupying the sierras on both sides of the Mondego, and cutting off all communication with Almeida. On the evening of the fourth, the French drove the British piquets from Pombal, and next morning pushed on so suddenly to Leiria, as to create considerable confusion; but after some hard fighting in the defiles, that city was cleared, and our army continued its retreat; the right by Thomar and Santarem, the centre by Bytalha and Rio Mayor, the left by Alcobaça and Óbidos; while a strong Portuguese force was thrown into Peniche. In the mean time, Massena having left his sick and wounded in Coimbra, without a sufficient garrison to protect them, colonel Trant made an attack on that city: about 600 French troops, rallying round the hospital, made a desperate resistance, being supported by such of the invalids within as could crawl to the windows, and use their muskets: at length, finding resistance vain, they surrendered as prisoners of war; and nearly 5000 men were conducted by the colonel to Oporto.

This disaster did not induce Massena to make any alteration in his movements, which he so accelerated, that in Alcoentre he was very near intercepting the British brigade of artillery, the retreat of which was gallantly defended by the sixteenth regiment and the Royals. At Alemquer also, the light division, under general Craufurd, was overtaken on the ninth: great confusion ensued; and if his soldiers had not been among the best that were ever collected under a standard, great losses would have occurred. False

Lord Wellington forms the lines of Torres Vedras.

CHAP.
LI.
1810.

information respecting their dispersion having reached general Hill at Alhandra, he thought it expedient to make a retrograde movement, in order to protect the passes at Arruda; so that when the enemy was in full march against the lines, the front from Alhandra to Sobral, a distance of about nine miles, was totally unguarded: Hill, however, whose caution, vigilance, and discretion throughout the whole peninsular campaign were above all praise, quickly ascertained the truth, and regained his former position before day-break on the eleventh. Soon afterwards, the whole army was safely disposed behind those impregnable lines of Torres Vedras, the formation of which have conferred as much honor on their projector as any of the great victories which he achieved: they consisted of three distinct ranges of defence; the first, extending from Alhandra on the Tagus to the mouth of the Zizandre on the sea coast, in length about twenty-nine miles; the second, varying from six to ten miles in rear of the front, stretched from Quintella on the Tagus to the mouth of the San Lorenzo, twenty-four miles in length; the third, intended to cover a forced embarkation, extended from Passo d'Arcos on the Tagus to the tower of Junquera on the coast, and enclosed within them an intrenched camp, strongly fortified, to protect the point of embarkation: of these stupendous works, the second line was the most formidable, as presenting a shorter range of defence, better salient points, and fewer passes for artillery; secured also by steeper acclivities, stronger forts, heavier guns, and more powerful abattis: the first line was chiefly intended to check the enemy, and enable the army to occupy the second without hurry or confusion: but while Massena had wasted the season of action on the frontier, the first had acquired so much strength by the skill of British engineers, and the fall of rain, that Wellington determined to fix his station in the front: his head quarters were at Pero Negro, near the Secorra, a rock on which a telegraph was erected, communicating with every part of the line.

The troops by which these defences were manned did not amount to much less than 130,000; of which 70,000 were regulars, and half of them were British: the remainder was composed of Portuguese and Spaniards; the latter, a wretched crew under Romana; but the former, well officered, and animated by a better spirit: the opposing force was not numerically equal to that for the defence; but it consisted wholly of veteran troops, well disciplined, and accustomed to the art of war. Surprised at the extent and strength of works, the existence of which had but very lately become known to him, Massena employed several days in examining their nature, and endeavoring to discover a spot where he might burst through: but he found every where difficulties not to be surmounted; and while the movements of the allies were free and unfettered, those of the French army were impeded and cramped by the ground in front: their dispositions were not made without the intervention of several skirmishes, of which that at Sobral, on the morning of the fourteenth, was the most important; when, attempting to dislodge the seventy-first regiment from a fieldwork, they were repulsed, pursued, and driven from their own intrenchments; which however were again evacuated at the approach of the eighth corps.

The war was now reduced to a species of blockade; the object of Massena being to support his army till reinforcements should arrive, and that of Wellington to starve his opponents before such an event could take place: for this purpose, he brought down the Portuguese militia from the north, and persuaded Carlos d'España to pass the Tagus with a considerable corps of Spaniards, to co-operate in cutting off all communication with the French rear, and, as it were, enclosing the blockaders. Massena soon began to send moveable columns throughout the country for provisions, and commenced the formation of magazines at Santarem; but the excesses of his soldiers had rendered the inhabitants bitter in their hatred; and though his foraging parties for a time contrived to procure a miserable sustenance, yet a thoughtless and

CHAP.

LL

1810.

wasteful expenditure soon exhausted the neighborhood, and they were obliged to extend their depredations over a wider range: then it was, that the independent corps of Portuguese and Spaniards sought revenge for desolated homes and slaughtered kindred; surprising and attacking the French in their expeditions, and slaying them with as little mercy as they had shown to others.

Within the lines, the state of our troops was totally different: free communications with the sea, and with their fleet, secured to them plenty of provisions; and, as the forts were chiefly garrisoned by native troops, their duty was comparatively light: officers and men therefore were permitted to enjoy the pleasures of rural life and of field sports in a most beautiful country; and as the weather was remarkably fine, the face of war never put on so cheerful an appearance: but too much time was not wasted in these enjoyments; new works were every day constructed, and the old ones strengthened, until the position became perfectly impregnable: nor was the discipline and instruction of our allies neglected; for every day saw improvements wrought among the Portuguese troops, of which their country subsequently reaped the benefit; and our commander soon had the satisfaction to perceive that he might place full confidence in their valor and exertions.

But while the two armies thus continued in a state of mutual observation, lord Wellington was exposed to difficulties and intrigues, which nothing but the resources of his great mind, and his imperturbable spirit, could have successfully combated. The presence of the enemy in the heart of the country, the destruction of property, and the influx of inhabitants into the district around the capital, created great distress and financial embarrassment; of which the vile faction of the patriarch took advantage to oppose all the measures both of lord Wellington and Mr. Stuart. Instead of performing their own duties, they had all along pretended to canvass the propriety of military operations: having assumed as a fact, that the struggle

ought to have been maintained on the frontier, they had given little or no assistance to the British general; and now they not only endeavored to stimulate public hatred against him, as the author of all the national misery; but established a regular and systematic opposition to his plans of defence.

CHAP.
LI.
1810.

In addition to this source of annoyance, representations were sent home by British officers of high rank, respecting the gloomy state of affairs, which operated strongly on the fears of the cabinet: their correspondence was very properly transmitted by lord Liverpool to the commander in chief, and his opinion on it earnestly demanded.

‘Thus beset on every side,’ says the peninsular historian, ‘the English general rose like a giant.’ Without noticing the arguments or forebodings in these letters, he entered into a calm review of the grounds on which he had undertaken the defence of Portugal; and having shown, that, up to the present period, his views had been in every instance borne out by the result, he reasonably asked that confidence should be placed on his judgment regarding future operations; the probable course of which he proceeded to trace with an intuitive sagacity, to which events corresponded in a most remarkable manner. Having replied, with conscious superiority of genius, to his own government, he next turned to the vile regency of Portugal; and, after severely reproaching them for their unpatriotic and deceitful conduct, he threatened to withdraw the British army wholly from their country, unless the practices of which he complained were amended: with regard to his own plans, he asserted, ‘that the king of England, and the prince regent of Portugal, had entrusted him with the conduct of military operations; and he would not suffer any person to interfere with them: he knew what to do, and would not alter his plans to meet the senseless suggestions of that regency: let the latter look to their own duties; let them provide food for their troops and people, while they preserve tranquillity in the capital.’

The violent temper however of the patriarch, and

CHAP.
LI.

1810.

the base principles of the Souzas, would probably have defeated all the dispositions of our great commander, if lord Wellesley had not held a place at this juncture in the British cabinet: nothing but encouragement from Brazil was required to give full effect to the plots of the regency; and this most assuredly would not have been long wanting, but for the strenuous efforts made by the noble marquis, in counteracting intrigues at the court of Rio Janeiro: by his means power was given to lord Wellington, which extended even to the removal of principal Souza from office; and of lord Strangford, the courtly British envoy, from Brazil: the subsidies were placed under the intire control of himself and Mr. Stuart; admiral Berkley, as well as Mr. Stuart, was appointed to a place in the regency; and Portugal was in a greater degree subjected to British superintendence and control. Although he was so strongly armed, lord Wellington removed no person from office; but maintained a line of conduct, in which it is difficult to determine which was most admirable, his sagacity or his temper: still fresh embarrassments arose, not only from a deficiency of supplies for the Portuguese troops, and their consequent desertion; but from the continued interference of the regency with military plans, the deplorable state of their finances, and their violent conduct toward their protectors. All these things occasioned serious apprehensions in the mind of our general, lest his antagonist might be able to retain his post until an overwhelming force should arrive to aid him: fortunately however the opinion which Massena had acquired from deserters respecting the vast strength of the British lines, added to sickness in his own army, the interception of convoys, and losses occasioned by the irregular troops in his rear, determined him to withdraw from a position which he had obstinately maintained, until the country for many leagues behind him was reduced to the state of a desert. Harassed and hopeless, toward the end of October he withdrew his hospitals and stores to Santa-rem: on the thirty-first, 2000 men forded the Zezere,

to cover the construction of a bridge; while general Foy, with a small escort, proceeded to France, for the purpose of carrying information of the state of affairs to the emperor. On the sixth of November, the bridge was destroyed by a flood: but it was speedily restored; and a second built higher up the river; after which, Massena began his retrograde movements with great secrecy and caution; and succeeded, with only a small loss, in concentrating his forces at Santarem. On the seventeenth, lord Wellington prepared to assail what he thought to be the rear-guard of a retreating army; but Massena had no intention to fall back any farther: 'his great qualities,' says colonel Napier, 'were roused by the difficulty of his situation; he had carried off his army with admirable management; and his new position was chosen with equal sagacity and resolution.' He considered both the political and military effect of his present attitude: while he occupied Santarem he appeared to besiege Lisbon, where he encouraged the disaffected party, and also strengthened opposition in the British parliament: by placing Loison's division in Golegao, and covering its rich plain with the second corps, he obtained necessary supplies for his troops; while he expected momentarily to be joined by the ninth corps, which had been added to his command, together with various detachments, and a large convoy of provisions, which general Gardanne was escorting with 5000 troops from Ciudad Rodrigo; and it was calculated, that before the end of January the French army would obtain a reinforcement of more than 40,000 men. Lord Wellington's lines of defence, therefore, were still farther strengthened, and a chain of forts erected parallel to the Tagus: at his earnest request, also, 5000 men were ordered to join him from England, and three regiments from Sicily.

We must now briefly advert to events which took place in the vicinity of Cadiz. When the chain of French forts round the harbor was completed, and the flotillas at San Lucar, Santa Maria, Puerto Real, and Chiclana were ready for action, Soult repaired in person to San Lucar, at the mouth of the Guadalquivir;

Affairs of
Spain.

CHAP.
LL.

1810.

and on the last night of October, he succeeded in eluding the British fleet, and safely conveying a flotilla into the canal of the Trocadero, where about 130 armed vessels and transports were now assembled: at the Trocadero point were immense batteries, and some enormous pieces of ordnance, called cannon-mortars, cast in Seville: these, being placed in slings, threw shells with such prodigious force as to range even over Cadiz, a distance of more than 5000 yards: but as they were partly loaded with lead to produce this effect, and their charge of powder was too small for a destructive explosion, they produced more alarm than mischief in the city. Soult's main design was to destroy the opposite fort of Puntales; then to pass the bay in his flotilla, and fix his army between the Isla de Leon and Cadiz. General Graham, who commanded there, although his force had been partly diminished by draughts to reinforce lord Wellington, took as active means as the miserable regency would permit, to strengthen the land defences; while admiral Keats drew thither all the armed craft from Gibraltar to augment the flotilla: but neither their entreaties, though warmly seconded by sir Henry Wellesley, the British ambassador, nor even the urgency of the danger, could overcome Spanish apathy; and the end of December approached, ere Graham, after many sharp altercations, could obtain permission to put the interior line of the Cortadura into such a state of defence, as would prevent a sudden and successful disembarkation of the enemy. But while Soult was meditating an attack, the events in Portugal counteracted his designs: the first instructions for a change of plan, sent to him by Napoleon, were intercepted by the guerillas; but at the end of December duplicates arrived, requiring him to co-operate with Massena; and he repaired to Seville, carrying with him Latour Maubourg's cavalry and 5000 infantry: no specific operation however was pointed out; and such was lord Wellington's precaution, such also the activity of the *partidas*, that nothing was known respecting Massena at Seville; nor could any communi-

cation be effected between the two marshals. Under these circumstances, Soult, considering that Sebastiani was fully occupied, and that the blockade of Cadiz, together with the protection of Seville, would not permit a draught of more than 20,000 men to be made from his army, represented to the emperor, that with such a force he dare not penetrate into the Alemtejo; which movement would oblige him to leave Olivenza and Badajos in his rear, with two Spanish corps under Ballasteros and Mendizabel; while Romana could bring 10,000 troops, without reckoning the British, against his front: he therefore demanded permission to besiege those two places; and Napoleon consented to his request: accordingly, after measures had been taken to secure Andalusia in his absence, Soult prepared a force of 16,000 infantry, 4000 cavalry, and 54 guns, with all the necessary articles for a siege. As general Hill at this time was obliged to return home on account of ill health, a large body of Portuguese troops was incorporated with the British on the Tagus, and the command transferred to marshal Beresford, under whose orders also was the Spanish brigade of Carlos d'España stationed at Abrantes: his instructions were, to prevent the passage of the river; to intercept all communication between Massena and Soult; to join the main army by Vellada if in retreat, and by Abrantes if in advance: hence, fixing his head-quarters at Chamusca, he disposed his troops along the Tagus, from Almeyrim to the mouth of the Zézere. It is not necessary to notice all the attacks made by the irregular forces and Portuguese militia on French detachments, while each commander waited for reinforcements which might enable him to assume offensive operations: it could, however, have been no source of satisfaction to Massena, who was sent, as 'the favorite child of victory,' for the purpose of driving the British leopards into the sea, to see them crouched before him, ready to make the fatal spring, as soon as he should be obliged to turn his back on their position.

Our domestic annals this year were marked by the

CHAP.
LI.

1810.
Domestic
events.

death of two distinguished individuals; Mr. Wyndham, and lord Collingwood. The eloquence of the former rose nearer to that of Mr. Burke than any of his contemporaries; for he had an animated manner, and a fertile genius; his reading was extensive, his memory retentive, his intellect acute, and his mind very philosophical: his name will ever remain dear to the British soldier, on account of the bill for limited service, which he introduced into parliament. The noble admiral died in the discharge of those weighty and important duties, under which his bodily powers at last gave way: he had been repeatedly urged by his friends to surrender his command, and to seek that repose which was necessary to recruit his wasted strength; but his constant reply was, 'that his life was his country's, in whatever way it might be required of him:' he refused therefore to quit his post, until he should be regularly relieved; though he ventured at times to urge the necessity of his return on the admiralty's notice: but his services appeared so necessary to ministers,¹² that all his applications were disregarded, and the sacrifice even of life was demanded: it was cheerfully granted; and this incomparable man died at sea, not having resigned his command until he became incapable of enduring the slightest fatigue: his body was brought home, and buried in St. Paul's cathedral, by the side of that illustrious hero, whom he so well seconded on the glorious day of Trafalgar. His title became extinct at his death; for the only favor which he ever condescended to ask,—that those honors he had so nobly won might be continued in the female line—was denied by ministerial and courtly ingratitude!

¹² So high was the opinion entertained of his judgment, that he was consulted from all quarters, and on all occasions, on questions of general policy, of regulations, and even of trade.—*Life of Collingwood*, vol. ii. p. 409. 'Lord Collingwood and I,' said lord chancellor Eldon, soon after the battle of Trafalgar, 'are memorable instances of the blessings to be derived from the country of our birth and the constitution under which we live. He and I were class-fellows at New-castle: we were placed at that school because neither his father nor mine could afford to place us elsewhere; and now, if he returns to take his seat in the house of lords, it will be my duty to express to him, sitting in his place, the thanks of that house (to which neither of us could expect to be elevated) for his eminent services to his country.'—*Life of Lord Eldon*, vol. ii. p. 118.

The British government having found it expedient to send an envoy to the court of Persia, an ambassador from the schah was on the seventeenth of January presented with great ceremony to the queen, into whose hands he delivered presents, consisting of three boxes of jewels, several splendid shawls, and a curious carpet. Soon after the battle of Eylau, Bonaparte had sent general Gardanne as French envoy to the Persian court: this embassy, according to de Bourrienne,¹³ though it related more immediately to a diversion against the eastern provinces of Russia, was connected with ideas which the French emperor had entertained at the very dawn of his power: he wished to strike England in the very heart of her Asiatic dominions. 'Circumstances, however,' says the historian, 'did not permit Napoleon to give it all the importance he desired: he contented himself with sending a few officers of engineers and artillery to Persia, who, on their arrival, were astonished at the number of English they found there.' On the third of July, lord Grenville was installed chancellor of the university of Oxford, having carried his election to that high office against two competitors, lord chancellor Eldon, and the duke of Beaufort.¹⁴ This year serious apprehensions began to be entertained, on account of the quantity of gold coin sent out of the kingdom: persons were employed to purchase it at a price far beyond its intrinsic value; and indictments against some who sold guineas at this rate, were laid in the court of king's bench: the counsel however of those who were found guilty took legal objections to the verdict, sub-

¹³ Vol. iii. p. 63.

¹⁴ 'After it was fully understood,' says lord Eldon, 'that the duke of Beaufort had refused to be a candidate, and some of his nearest connections had canvassed for me, he has become a candidate: this makes confusion more confused; but I shall stand it out, as I have consented to stand—for I cannot be made a fool of with my own consent; and therefore if the duke of Beaufort and I go to the wall, and Grenville succeeds, my consolation is that I am not to blame.' His biographer observes, that 'when this contest was in progress the tenure of the ministry seemed by no means secure; and the apparent probability that lord Grenville might become the leader of a government, whose chancellor would not be lord Eldon, had a strong operation on the 'independent' or trimming voters of Oxford: but the whigs conducted the struggle with their accustomed zeal and activity.'—Life of Lord Eldon, vol. ii. p. 109. The king is reported to have said, at the end of the contest;—'it is hard for Cambridge to have a unitarian chancellor, and Oxford a popish one.'

CHAP.
LI.
1810.

ject to the opinion of the judges. The amount of Bank paper in circulation on the twelfth of January this year, was £14,668,640 in notes of five pounds, and above that sum ; £5,854,170 in notes below five pounds; and £884,120 in Bank post bills.

The records of the year were distinguished by the trial of a celebrated character, Mr. W. Cobbett, for what was denominated a libel on the German legion, which had been marched to Littleport in the isle of Ely to superintend the flogging of some British militiamen. The patriotic defendant was sentenced to a fine of £1000, and two years' imprisonment in Newgate; an award, which tended neither to mitigate the acrimony of that caustic writer's attacks on his political adversaries; nor to stop his humane exertions against a system, under which so much cruelty and injustice has been, and even still is, perpetrated.

CHAPTER LII.

GEORGE III. (CONTINUED.)—1811.

Opening of parliament by the regent—His sentiments regarding the present cabinet, &c.—Distress of the times—Subject of military discipline—Report of the bullion committee—Conduct of lord King, and consequent resolution of parliament—Lord Sidmouth's motion respecting dissenting preachers—Affairs of the Irish catholics—Amendment of the criminal law—Restoration of the duke of York—Disturbances in Ireland; and of the manufacturing districts in England—Dreadful murders in London—General state of Europe and America—Affairs of Spain—Soul's invasion of Estremadura—Siege of Badajos—Movement in Andalusia, leading to the battle of Barosa, &c.—Fall of Badajos—Massena's retreat from Santarem commences—Lord Wellington's pursuit—Quarrel between Massena and Ney—Massena crosses the frontier—Almeida invested by the British—Lord Wellington sets off to visit marshal Beresford in Estremadura—Operations of the British army about Badajos—Wellington's return to his army in the north—Massena's advance—Battle of Fuentes Onoro—Massena resigns the command to Marmont—Lord Wellington sets out for Badajos—Operations of marshal Beresford in that quarter—Soul's advance from Andalusia—Battle of Albuera—Wellington's arrival—Attack on Badajos, which fails—Positions of the British and French armies—Soul and Marmont retire—French operations in Catalonia and Valencia, &c.—Lord Wellington's position with regard to the Portuguese government—His resolute but judicious conduct—Returns to his army on the Coa—Grievances which he endured—Advance of Marmont—Combat of El Bodon—Subsequent movements, and investment of Ciudad Rodrigo—Remarkable exploit of sir Rowland Hill at Arroyo Molino—Suchet's operations, capture of Murviedro, and investment of Valencia—Naval victory of captain Hoste in the Adriatic—Action of captain Barrie in Sagone-bay—Of captains Ferris and Richardson at the mouth of the Garonne—Capture of French frigates off Madagascar—Conquest of Java—Election of a chancellor at Cambridge.

CHAP. THE prince of Wales, having been installed regent,
 LII. — opened parliament, on the twelfth of February, by
 ——— 1811. commission; a circumstance, which tended to confirm
 Opening of an opinion prevailing in some quarters, that he en-
 parliament. dured, rather than adopted, the present administration.
 As the address did not provoke a division, none was attempted; but the minister replied to some observations of Mr. Whitbread in a manner that indicated full confidence in the security of his situation: in fact, the prince had already begun to withdraw his confidence from that party which had long been distinguished by the peculiar title of 'his friends,' and very readily acquiesced in the retention of power by the present cabinet. We often err in referring to a single cause actions that proceed from mixed motives: some have ascribed this change in the regent's sentiments to an 'impulse of filial duty and affection, which,' as he expressed himself in a letter to Mr. Perceval, 'led him to retain the services of that gentleman and his colleagues, lest any act of the regent might in the smallest degree interfere with the progress of the king's recovery:' others considered his decision as the result of indolent and sensual habits, leading him to deprecate change altogether; especially, since he calculated on a readier compliance with his desires from the men in office, than from the uncompromising spirit of lords Grey and Grenville: others again attributed the whole to an intrigue begun and carried on by Sheridan, who had long lost the confidence of his party, and who took this opportunity of gratifying both his vanity and revenge.¹ Probably each of these causes had more or less effect in determining the prince to preserve the cabinet: the nation in general applauded his resolution; since the opposition possessed more of parliamentary influence than of national support: the whigs had not yet learned to identify themselves with popular interests and privileges; and though they agreed in advocating the great cause of religious liberty, yet in this respect they had advanced beyond

¹ A full account of this affair is given in the second volume of *Moore's Life of Sheridan*.

the opinions of the age; and their support of the catholic question tended to alienate them from the affections of the people as well as of the sovereign: they still however held fast their opinion, that the present ministry would expire with the restrictions imposed on the regent; and, accordingly, they extolled his conduct, when, with a moderation not often adopted by princes, he declined a provision for his household, which Mr. Perceval intended to bring before parliament; declaring, that he would not add to the burdens of the country by any augmentation of his public state: had he persisted in such sentiments during the increasing difficulties of the times, posterity would have judged more favorably of his sincerity. In fact, commercial distress was now felt so severely, as to attract the attention of government; and on the first of March, a committee of twenty-one members of the lower house was appointed to investigate the state of commercial credit: on the eleventh, their report was taken into consideration; and an act passed, empowering certain commissioners to employ £6,000,000 of the public money, in assisting such merchants as should be able to give security for the repayment of any sum advanced: still the distress continued to increase, and displayed itself by frightful lists of bankruptcies in every gazette; which were mainly attributed to the American embargo, to the operation of the Milan decrees, and to the confiscation of British property on the continent. In the course of this session, the subject of military punishment came several times before the house; and, in speaking of the abominable excess to which this species of torture was carried, sir Francis Burdett nobly distinguished himself:—‘There were but few persons,’ said the honorable baronet, ‘who knew what was the dreadful manner in which this torture was inflicted: the instrument, formed of pieces of whiplash, each as thick as a quill, and knotted, was applied by the main strength of fresh men, relieving each other, until human nature could bear no more; and then, if pains were taken to recover the unhappy sufferer, it was only that he

CHAP.
LII.

1811.

might undergo fresh agony. The most disgusting part of the whole transaction was the attendance of a surgeon, whose business seemed to be a profanation of the healing art; to detect any lingering principle of life, which could enable the wretched man to undergo more suffering: he did not believe, that in the description which the poets gave of hell, there were any tortures equal to what is called a military punishment.' He also declared that the inefficacy of this infliction was not less remarkable than its cruelty; and he instanced the case of the fifteenth regiment of dragoons, which had been noted for its services in the field, and for its peaceable, modest, and proper demeanor at home, before the duke of Cumberland acquired the command! until that time, punishments in it had seldom been known; but it was a melancholy thing to state, that more cruel punishments took place within a few months after the appointment of his royal highness, than had occurred in that regiment since the period of the seven years' war; yet the state of the men was one of turbulence and discontent. Sir Francis moved an address on the subject to the prince regent, which was ably seconded by Mr. Brougham, who contrasted the scandalous conduct of the duke of Cumberland with that of the duke of Gloucester, whose regiment was in the highest state of discipline, though he had, in public orders, thanked his lieutenant-colonel for not having had a single flogging in it during two years and a half. Mr. Manners Sutton, judge-advocate, thought the statements he had heard were overcharged, though he admitted the importance of the subject: indeed he showed this, when he brought forward the mutiny bill; in which, greatly to his honor, he had introduced a clause, giving a discretionary power to courts martial of awarding a sentence of imprisonment instead of corporal punishment: for so barbarous were our military laws before this period, that no option lay between torture or death. Several other members spoke on both sides; but the house rejected the address by an immense majority. On another occasion, its members showed still less sym-

pathy with the sufferings of their fellow-subjects, when a case of military torture, carried to an extreme totally inconsistent with the innate laws of human nature, was exposed by colonel Wardle: the sufferer in this instance was Curtis, a corporal in a militia regiment, who, having been charged with exciting discontent among the men on account of a deficiency of proper clothing, and of speaking disrespectfully of his colonel, was brought before a court-martial, which acquitted him of the first part of the charge, but found him guilty of the second, and sentenced him to receive one thousand lashes! At the time of its execution, he was stated to have been so sick and weak, as to require support while they tied him to the halberds: he then received 200 strokes, inflicted with extreme severity; and was confined to the hospital, under the endurance of excruciating agony, from the fifth of August to the fourteenth of November; when he had the option of undergoing the rest of this horrible sentence, or of serving in a condemned regiment for life in the West Indies; and rather than expire under the lash, he chose the latter alternative. Alas! the only person found to vote with colonel Wardle for inquiry into this case, was colonel Langton, commander of the regiment in which Curtis had served; and who, being in his place as member of the house, stated his conviction, that he had done nothing that was not absolutely necessary for military discipline. This infamous apathy of their representatives necessarily tended to increase the desire of parliamentary reform among the people.

The report of the bullion committee was taken into consideration on the sixth of May; when a series of resolutions was moved by Mr. Horner, who contended that the standard value of gold, as a measure of exchange, could not fluctuate, though its real price was subject to the variation arising from an increase or diminution of supply; that bank paper, measured by this standard, was so depreciated, as to render our continental exchanges unfavorable, and to advance prices, occasioning great losses to creditors, and injuring all incomes which depended on money payments;

CHAP.
LII.

1811.

while the only effectual remedy for these evils was the resumption of cash payments by the Bank. Mr. George Rose however had the hardihood to contend that the paper currency was not depreciated; that Bank issues could not affect the circulation; that the resumption of cash payments would not bring back to that circulation a single guinea; that the political and commercial relations of this country with foreign states were sufficient to account for the unfavorable state of the exchanges; and that, although it might be expedient to remove the restrictions on cash payments whenever it was compatible with the public interest; yet to fix a definite period, nearer than six months after the conclusion of peace, would be a measure extremely dangerous. A series of counter resolutions, founded on these reasonings, was brought forward by Mr. Vansittart, secretary of the treasury, and adopted, after repeated discussions, by a large majority: it soon appeared, however, that the question was not to be set at rest by this decision: the depreciation of the paper currency became progressive; the difference between bank notes and gold coin began to be felt in the market price of all commodities; and lord King, being determined to bring the matter to an issue, sent notices to his tenants, that, as they had agreed to pay their rents in good and lawful money of Great Britain, and as he would no longer accept of bank notes at their nominal value, he expected them to pay either in guineas, or in an equivalent weight of Portuguese gold coin, or in bank notes sufficient to purchase it at the market price. 'I saw,' said his lordship in the house of lords, 'no course left but to give up my property; or to hold it at such value as the Bank might choose to put on it; or to avail myself of the means which the law as yet afforded me for its preservation.' Lord Stanhope, anticipating much mischief from this proceeding, introduced a bill into the house of lords, prohibiting the payment of gold coin at a higher value than that fixed by the Mint, and the receipt of bank notes for

a smaller sum than that for which they were issued: on its first reading, this bill was opposed by ministers as unnecessary; but on the second, they discovered their error, and it passed into a law.

CHAP.
LII.
1811.

On the twentieth of May, Mr. Perceval brought forward his budget: to meet the current expenses of the year, including £2,000,000 granted to the government of Portugal, and £100,000 to its distressed subjects, a supply of £54,308,450 was required; and the means of answering this demand were drawn from the surplus of the consolidated fund, a loan of £12,000,000, an additional vote of credit, and the war taxes, to which an increase was made by duties on timber, foreign linens, and pearl ashes: a proposed tax on American cotton wool was abandoned; strong opposition being made to the principle of taxing a raw material.

The debates of this session, relating to matters of religion, excited considerable interest. A great sensation was raised among the dissenters by a bill which lord Sidmouth introduced, as an amendment of the toleration act; prohibiting any person from obtaining a license to preach, unless he obtained the recommendation of at least six respectable householders of the congregation to which he belonged, such congregation being willing to listen to his instructions: it also required that those who intended to be itinerants should bring testimonials, stating that they were men of sober life and character, and qualified to perform the functions to which they aspired. At first sight, this bill appeared calculated to effect much good, in preventing improper and unaccredited persons from assuming the most important of all duties: but as it was considered liable to be perverted to purposes of intolerance, it encountered vehement opposition: in forty-eight hours 336 petitions against it were poured into the house of lords, where it was strongly denounced by lord Holland; and when it came to be read a second time, it was met by 500 more petitions, and rejected without a division.

As an opinion prevailed among the Irish catholics

CHAP.
LII.

1811.

that the prince was favorable to their claims, his investment with power contributed to increase their activity and zeal: one of the measures which they had proposed was the establishment of a general committee in Dublin, composed of delegates elected by each county; but this being deemed unlawful, Mr. Wellesley Pole, the Irish secretary, sent a circular letter to the sheriffs and county magistrates, requiring them to arrest all persons engaged in such elections. This letter excited much discussion in parliament; when Mr. Pole stated, in explanation, that the committee was not intended, like that of 1809, to confine itself to the business of petitioning; but undertook the management of catholic affairs generally, and imitated in some respects the forms of the house of commons: the opinion of the great law officers had been taken by the lord lieutenant; and the attorney-general had drawn up the circular. Petitions prepared by the committee were presented to both houses: that in the commons was enforced by Mr. Grattan with his usual brilliancy of eloquence, and seconded by Mr. Ponsonby; but the minister, defying the accusation of bigoted intolerance, strongly opposed any grant of power to men whom he thought likely to abuse it; and the petition was rejected by a hundred and forty-six voices against eighty-three: it shared the same fate in the lords, where the bishop of Norwich differed with the majority, from a desire to promote the public good by a union of talents, and from a conviction that the claims of the petitioners might be safely granted.

The statutes of the session were, as usual, more numerous than important: two of the number may be mentioned as possessing greater interest than the rest, since they tended to diminish, in the instances of stealing linen and cotton from fields and outbuildings, that long list of offences, to which our law assigned the punishment of death: this mitigation of the criminal code was due to the exertions of sir Samuel Romilly. Three other bills of a similar tendency, brought in by the same enlightened legislator, were

passed by the commons, but thrown out in the other house, through deference to the opinion of its law lords; men, not always the most competent to determine on the reform of law, although they may be its best expounders.

CHAP.
LII.
1811.

A select committee of the upper house to inquire into delays and arrears in the Court of Chancery, as well as the appellate tribunal of the house of lords, had made its report on the thirtieth of May, declaring that there were depending 296 appeals, and 42 writs of error; recommending also the appointment of an additional judge in chancery. On the fifth of June a similar committee was granted by the commons; which took evidence respecting arrears, but found the remains of time of this session insufficient for the object of its appointment: it therefore stood over till next year.

One of the earliest acts of the prince, after his assumption of the regency, was to restore the duke of York to the post of commander-in-chief: this measure induced lord Milton to propose a vote of censure on its responsible advisers; in which he was supported by sir Francis Burdett, Mr. Whitbread, and lord Althorp. Mr. Perceval readily acknowledged the responsibility of ministers regarding the measure in question; but contended, that when sir David Dundas expressed a wish to retire, they could have no hesitation respecting the person whom they should recommend to supply his place: the eminent services rendered to the army by the duke of York left them no choice; especially, as no resolution had passed to preclude his restoration. It appeared that a reaction in favor of his royal highness had taken place within as well as without the house: several members expressed regret on account of their former votes; and Mr. Ponsonby himself, the leader of Opposition, voted against the motion, which was negatived by an immense majority. His majesty's health, in the early part of the year, underwent some slight variations, with lucid, or rather, tranquil intervals; but the report of the queen's council, a few days before the prorogation of parliament, which took place on the

Restora-
tion of the
duke of
York.

CHAP. LII. twenty-fourth of July, put an end to all hopes of his resuming the functions of royalty.

1811.

Disturbances in Ireland.

The rejection of the petition from the Roman catholics of Ireland, and more especially the secretary's circular, called forth much excitement and energy among that large body of British subjects: on the ninth of July, a meeting was held in Dublin, at which resolutions were passed to form a committee, consisting of all catholic peers, and their eldest sons, baronets, and prelates, with ten delegates from each county, in order to prepare petitions for the repeal of the penal laws, and to keep up communication and co-operation among themselves. In consequence, a proclamation was issued by the Irish government, quoting a section of the convention act, and declaring its intention to enforce legal penalties against such persons as should proceed to elect deputies, managers, or delegates to the catholic committee: on the day following, however, the general committee was held in Capel-street, the earl of Fingal being in the chair; and a resolution was passed, purporting, that the committee, relying on their constitutional rights, and conscious that they were not transgressing the laws, were determined to persevere in meeting for the sole purpose of petitioning; after which, conceiving that the convention act did not apply to their case, they proceeded, as if they imagined the Irish government would not act on its own proclamation: in this, however, they were mistaken; for on the ninth of August, five gentlemen, who were present at the election of delegates in Liffey-street chapel, were arrested, and carried before the chief justice of the king's bench, on the charge of being elected delegates, or of being present and aiding at such election.

In the mean time, the general committee of 300 delegated catholics met on the nineteenth of October, within the Circus at Dublin, in the presence of a vast concourse of spectators; when, lord Fingal being called on to preside, the draught of a petition to parliament was proposed by lord Netterville, and adopted by the assembly: the chair was vacated, the meeting dissolved, and the members began to disperse in little more than

a quarter of an hour: two magistrates then made their appearance; but, under such circumstances, were unable to act. On the twenty-first of November, the trial of Dr. Sheridan, one of the five arrested delegates, came on; and the public mind in Ireland waited the event with feelings of intense anxiety: thirty-three jurymen answered to their names; of whom, twenty-two were challenged by the crown, but none by the traverser. The case turned essentially on the construction of a single sentence; the convention act declaring certain meetings, called together under the 'pretence' of petitioning, to be illegal; whereas it was contended, in this instance, that petitioning was not a pretence, but the real purpose. The attorney-general maintained, that, in a legal point of view, the terms were synonymous; and the chief justice, coinciding with him in opinion, summed up his charge decidedly adverse to the accused: the jury, all protestants, took an hour and a half to consider their verdict; and no language, it is said, could describe the anxiety manifested by the crowds in court, in the hall, and in all the avenues leading to the seat of justice: when they returned, there was a deep silence for almost a minute; and on a verdict of acquittal being delivered, a peal of applause rang through the court and galleries, which shook the judicial bench; and the overwhelming shouts of popular enthusiasm were heard over a great part of the city. The remaining prosecutions were abandoned, and the arrested persons commenced actions against the chief justice, by whose warrant they had been apprehended: a third meeting, however, of the catholic committee was dispersed on the twenty-third of December; and the chairmen, lords Fingal and Netterville, were arrested: but on the twenty-sixth, an aggregate assembly met, and passed a series of resolutions, denouncing as tyrannical, and defying as illegal, the acts of the Irish government; ordering, also, that a petition for the redress of grievances should be presented to the regent, at the expiration of his restrictions.

England, at this time, was far from tranquil, especially in its manufacturing districts; where a spirit of

CHAP.
LII.

1811.

Dreadful
murders.

licentiousness, and daring defiance of the laws, gave origin to that system of outrage, which led, in the following year, to the formidable riots of the Luddites. This began among the stocking-weavers of Nottinghamshire, who found so little employment for their industry, that they were reduced to a state of extreme indigence: attributing this to the newly-invented frames, which, by diminishing manual labor, lessened the demand for their exertions, and asserting that many masters offered wages too low for their support, they assembled in crowds, and proceeded to wreak their vengeance on the obnoxious machinery: they then entered into correspondence with discontented manufacturers in other counties, whom they exhorted to redress their grievances by a spirited combination. The metropolis was terrified this winter by murders of the most dreadful description in the neighborhood of Wapping: the atrocious and unparalleled nature of those acts, the secrecy with which they were committed, and the extreme difficulty of tracing the perpetrators by the utmost vigilance and activity of the police, made a singular impression on the public mind: many thought that the very character of the British nation was changed; that a regular system of murder and assassination was laid, and would, as opportunities occurred, be acted on; so that, under this general and undefined alarm, rest fled from the pillow of thousands; and individuals, despairing of assistance from society, began to take measures for self-protection. The circumstances that led to this state of public feeling were briefly these: on the eighth of December, the family of Mr. T. Marr, silk-mercier, 29, Ratcliffe-highway, consisting of himself, his wife, an infant son only fourteen weeks old, and an apprentice, were all found murdered: the servant girl, having been sent out on Saturday night, at twelve, to purchase some oysters for supper, and to pay a baker's bill, returned in about twenty minutes, and found the shutters closed, the door fast, and no appearance of light within: having alarmed some neighbors, the door was burst open; and it is supposed that the murderer or murderers then escaped

at the back of the premises: nothing was taken from the house, although £152 in cash were found in a tin box, beside four or five pounds in Mr. Marr's pockets: there was left behind a large shipwright's maul, a ripping chisel of iron eighteen inches long, and a wooden mallet with the head about four inches square. Before the alarm excited by this horrid crime had subsided, between eleven and twelve at night on the nineteenth, the neighborhood of New Gravel-lane was alarmed by a cry of murder from a person descending in his shirt from an upper window of the King's Arms public house, kept by a Mr. Williamson: he was a lodger; and deposed before the magistrates, that, after he had retired to rest, he was roused by a voice crying out, 'We shall all be murdered: ' after this, he cautiously went down stairs; and, looking through the glass window of the tap-room, saw a powerful, well-made man, dressed in a shaggy great-coat, stooping over the body of Mrs. Williamson, apparently rifling her pockets; while his ears were assailed by the deep groans of a person, as in the agonies of death. Terrified beyond measure, he made his way up stairs again, and escaped as above mentioned: when he gave the alarm, two resolute men broke open the door, and found the mistress of the house and the maid servant, lying one on the other near the kitchen fire, with their throats cut from ear to ear: continuing their search, they proceeded to the cellar, where they found Mr. Williamson, also quite dead, one of his legs being broken, and his head nearly severed from the body; having evidently made a determined resistance: the assassins however had again escaped, being favored by an extensive piece of waste ground behind the premises. Large rewards, amounting to nearly £1500, for the discovery of the murderers, were offered by government, and other public bodies: several persons were taken up on suspicion; and very strong evidence was adduced against an Irish sailor, named John Williams. This man lodged at the Pear-tree public-house, from which the very maul used in the massacre of the Marr family had been missing: a woman, who

CHAP.
LII.
1811.

washed his linen, deposed to one of his shirts having been bloody and torn; other witnesses proved that he was near Williamson's house on the night of the murder, and that he was well acquainted with both families; while John Harris, a fellow-lodger, deposed to his coming home about one o'clock on the night of the first murder; and to some other circumstances, strongly tending to fix on him the guilt of both. On this evidence, the prisoner was committed to Coldbath-fields prison; but he defeated the ends of justice, by hanging himself with his own neckcloth, from the rail within his cell, on which the bed and clothes are placed in the day time. A coroner's verdict of *felo de se* being returned, the body of this supposed miscreant was exposed on a raised platform; and, having been paraded round the neighborhood, amid the execrations of the populace, was consigned to the earth, at a place where four roads meet, with all the circumstances of ignominy due to such atrocious crimes. Blame was justly imputed to those who had the custody of Williams; and the public alarm did not subside for a considerable length of time.

State of the
continent.

From occurrences at home, we must now revert to the state of Europe. Persevering in his efforts to destroy the commerce of England, Bonaparte ordered the French flag to be hoisted at Hamburg on the first of January; and that city was now declared to be part of the French empire: the conscription law was applied to the levying of seamen in the thirty maritime departments, and many conscripts of the four ensuing years were destined to the service of the navy: at Antwerp, twenty ships of the line were ordered to be built, and the basin was rendered capable of containing fifty sail: Spanish prisoners were employed in the dock-yards and fortifications; and men of all nations were engaged to man the fleets with which Britain was to be subdued. On the twentieth of April, Napoleon's cup of prosperity seemed to be full, when a son was born to him; and the ancient title of 'king of Rome' was revived for this infant, apparently destined to rule over an empire more extensive than that of

Charlemagne. With conscious pride, the emperor declared to his legislative body, that French dominion, during the last year, had been extended over sixteen departments, containing five millions of people; that the mouths of the Rhine, the Meuse, and the Scheldt, together with the whole course of the latter river, were now French; that improvements on a gigantic scale had taken place over the whole territory; while its finances were in such a state, that France could go on ten years without borrowing money. Yet, at this moment, the French people, having lost all their colonies, were substituting roasted horse-beans for coffee, and extracting sugar from beet-root! Accompanied by his young empress, Napoleon visited Ostend, Antwerp, and Amsterdam, where he announced the division of the departments of Holland, and their proportion of the annual expenses: he also established two academies, and several schools, in which the French language was to be taught: but when he returned to Paris, in the beginning of November, he found it necessary to call out 120,000 conscripts of the year 1812: he now felt that a rupture with Russia, offended by the seizure of Oldenburg, the extension of the grand duchy of Warsaw, and the continued occupation of Dantzic, had become inevitable; while all the cabinets of Europe were anxious to break their fetters, and the people ardently desired an order of things less fatal to their industry and trade. For some time it had been apparent that the cordiality between the two emperors had greatly decreased; when Napoleon, in an answer to his council of commerce, complained that Russia had not caused his decrees to be respected; adding, 'I am, and always will be, master of the Baltic:' yet, where, at that time, could Russian proprietors have found a market for timber, pitch, tallow, and hemp, almost the sole produce of their vast estates, except in England? and where was the power, by which Alexander might control the aristocracy of his unwieldy empire? If the continental system, therefore, of Napoleon was to be maintained, it became necessary for him to reduce Russia to the same degree of dependency

CHAP.
LII.
1811.

in which Prussia and Austria were held : how else could he expect to complete his vast design of universal dominion ?

While the czar was thus preparing for a contest with France, the government of the North American states was proceeding toward the same issue with Great Britain. Our orders in council not having been repealed in February, Mr. Pinckney, the American envoy, was recalled, and had his audience of leave on the first of March; from which time the American ports were opened to the ships of France, and closed against those of England. An encounter, which soon afterwards took place between the *Little Belt*, a British sloop of war, and the *President*, an American frigate of the largest class, seemed calculated to produce an immediate rupture : as great uncertainty however existed concerning the first shot fired, the governments of both nations felt disposed to pass over the affair. A British envoy extraordinary was sent to the United States on the other subjects of dispute; but he found it impossible to effect an adjustment, without exceeding his instructions, by holding forth an expectation that our orders in council would be revoked; and on the meeting of congress in November, the president recommended vigorous measures of preparation by sea and land, in consequence of the hostile inflexibility of the British cabinet.

For some time a fierce war had been going on between Russia and the Porte; but proposals were this year made by the grand vizir for an armistice; which, as Alexander had more serious negotiations now on his hands, was readily accepted. In Sweden, the crown prince, seeing that the measures which he had been obliged to adopt against British commerce were displeasing to the people, relaxed in that point, and consequently incurred the violent resentment of Napoleon: this led to repeated demands and proposals, which were declined; and early next year Swedish Pomerania and Rugen were occupied by French troops: Bernadotte, however, very adroitly took advantage of this crisis, not only to emancipate Sweden from de-

pendence on France; but also, without engaging actively in the war, to obtain a prospect of Norway as a compensation for the loss of Finland. Prussia at this time enjoyed repose; but it was the repose of degradation, while her king was reluctantly obliged to join the confederation of the Rhine. Austria was employed in recruiting her finances; the country being inundated with a paper currency, much depreciated: in Naples the French remained quiet, permitting her British allies to uphold the most detestable of tyrannies in Sicily: it appeared, however, that since the marriage of Bonaparte with a princess of Austria, the court of Palermo became less hostile to French interests; the profligate queen had lately employed a large portion of the subsidies sent by Great Britain for the defence of the island, in organising and supporting a strong party favorable to Napoleon, the enemy of her family, and the despoiler of her throne. Lord William Bentinck, our new ambassador, had scarcely landed, before he found the politics and plans of the court so inimical to his country, that he judged it necessary to return home, in order to obtain fresh instructions; when he found the government inclined towards a forcible occupation of the island, as the only method of defeating the queen's machinations.

CHAP.
LII.
1811.

The chief interest connected with European affairs still attached itself to the peninsula. On the second of January, Suchet made himself master of Tortosa, after a siege which did honor to its defenders; and about the same time Soult led his army into Estremadura, where every precaution urged on the Spanish government and generals by lord Wellington had been totally neglected. Terror and confusion spread far and wide in the province: Badajos was ill-provisioned; Albuquerque in ruins; Olivenza nearly dismantled; and in the midst of this disorder, Ballasteros was drawn off toward the Condada de Neibla by the regency, who thus took from Estremadura half its defenders at the very moment of Soult's invasion: hence, when he came to invest Olivenza, Mendizabel was unable effectually to relieve it; and the place surrendered, with all its stores

Affairs of
Spain.

CHAP. and ammunition, as well as 4000 effective troops, on
 LII. the twenty-second of January: Ballasteros also was
 1811. defeated, with a loss of 1000 men, at Castillejos; Copon's troops were recalled to Cadiz; and on the twenty-sixth, Soult marched against Badajos, having taken or dispersed in about twenty days all the forces which might have frustrated his designs. On the twenty-fourth died the marquis de la Romana, a man of patriotic spirit, although deficient in military talent: his death at this period was a great loss to his country; as he had begun to lay aside that obstinate pride which prohibited success, and more willingly submitted to the dictates of that great captain who commanded the allies of Spain.

Mendizabel succeeded to his command in Estremadura, having previously received Romana's orders to adopt lord Wellington's plan: this was, to concentrate all the Spanish troops on the frontier; and, before the enemy appeared on the right bank of the Guadiana, to occupy a position of great natural strength near to Badajos, which might prevent Soult from investing that place, or even straitening its communications. 'With soldiers of any other nation,' said lord Wellington, 'success is certain: but no calculation can be made of any operation in which Spanish troops are engaged.'² The event proved the justness of his apprehension; for when Soult drove in the outposts of Badajos on the twenty-sixth, Mendizabel shut himself up with 6000 men in that fortress; but although a siege had been expected for a year, the place was unprovisioned: still it was possible to execute the British general's plan; yet no Spaniard moved; and, on the twenty-seventh, Latour Maubourg, crossing the Guadiana at Merida, forded the Gebora, and cut off the communications of Campo Mayor and Elvas.

Siege of
 Badajos.

In the early part of this siege, the weather was so rigorous, and scarcity in the French camp so pressing, that those communications were soon re-opened: accordingly, Mendizabel, in the night of February fifth,

² Napier, vol. iii. p. 429.

repaired in person to Elvas; and, leaving the defence of Badajos to the governor Menacho, pitched his own camp round San Cristoval, a large fortress crowning a hill on the opposite bank of the Guadiana. In every point however he rejected the counsel of lord Wellington; and, having neglected all his defences, he was attacked by Soult, who, passing the Guadiana and Gebora river, fell on his army, and shamefully defeated it; strewing the field with 900 slain, and taking 8000 prisoners, with all the guns, ammunition, and baggage. In the evening after this action, the French marshal cast up intrenchments round the position which he had gained, and renewed the siege with redoubled vigor: but continual rains interrupted his convoys; many of his troops fell sick; and Badajos was still powerful, with a garrison of 9000 men, under a resolute and honorable commandant. No communication had yet been opened by Soult with Massena; and Wellington, in momentary expectation that his reinforcements would arrive, was anxious to bring on a crisis; when occurrences took place in Andalusia, which seriously menaced the French power in that province.

General Graham, who commanded at Cadiz, being aware of Soult's departure, and knowing also that the fifth corps had quitted Seville, concerted a plan with the Spaniards to drive marshal Victor out of his lines: for this purpose, 10,000 infantry and 600 cavalry of the allies, being embarked at Cadiz, were landed, on the twenty-second of February, at Algesiras; whence they marched next day to Tarifa. General Zayas, who commanded the Spanish troops left in the Isla, was, in the mean time, directed to throw a bridge over the San Petri canal, near the sea shore; Ballasteros, with the remnant of his army, was ordered to menace Seville; several *partidas* were ready to act against Sebastiani; and insurrections were meditated in various other quarters.

The troops at Tarifa, being joined by a considerable British, German, and Portuguese force, were assembled under general Graham, a man of undaunted courage and true military talent: their numbers amounted

CHAP.
LII.

1811.

to somewhat more than 4000; but 7000 Spaniards arrived on the twenty-seventh, under La Peña, the vilest of all those generals who blighted the hopes of their country, and to whom Graham, for the sake of unanimity, unfortunately ceded the chief command. Next day, these combined forces moved forward about twelve miles, in the direction of Medina Sidonia; and being now within four leagues of the enemy's posts, they were re-organised; the vanguard being given to general Lardizabal; the centre to the prince of Anglona; the reserve, composed of the British and two Spanish regiments, to Graham; the cavalry of both nations to colonel Whittingham, an English officer in the Spanish service.

The French covering division, consisting of three battalions and a regiment of horse, under general Casagne, whose outposts were at Vejer de la Frontera and Casa Vieja, was stationed at Medina Sidonia; which city had been taken by the Spaniards, but retaken by the French, and intrenched on the twenty-ninth. The signal for action being now given, the French generals, perceiving the people ready for insurrection, concentrated their forces at various points; and Victor, having manned his lines before Cadiz with a mixed force, took post with 11,000 veteran troops near to Chiclana: there he waited till his antagonists should develop their designs. At first, La Peña's march pointed to Medina; his vanguard stormed Casa Vieja on the second of March; and he was joined by troops from Algesiras, which brought his whole force up to 12,000 foot and 800 horse, with twenty-four guns. On the third, he resumed his march; but hearing that Medina was intrenched, he turned off toward the coast, driving the French from Vejer: next evening, he advanced in the same direction; and on the morning of the fifth, arrived at the heights of Barosa, a low ridge overlooking a small plain, bounded on his left by the coast, on his right by the forest of Chiclana, and in front by a large pine wood; beyond which rose the narrow height of Bermeja, extending from the Almanza creek to the sea.

The marches to this position had been very long and fatiguing, contrary to a promise made to Graham by La Peña; and before all came up, the Spanish commander, as if in contempt of his colleague, without disclosing to him any part of his plans, sent Lardizabal with the vanguard, reinforced by a squadron of horse and three guns, directly against the mouth of the San Petri; from the bridge of which Zayas had been driven back by the French into the Isla: it was a dangerous movement; but Lardizabal, after a sharp action, in which he lost 300 men, forced the enemy's posts, and effected a junction with Zayas. The British general was very desirous of holding the heights of Barosa, as a key both to offensive and defensive operations; but Lascy, chief of the Spanish staff, having opposed this plan, La Peña most uncourtously ordered Graham to move on, through the wood in front, to Bermeja: this command was instantly obeyed; the flank companies of the ninth and eighty-second regiments being left under major Brown to guard the baggage: but it was obeyed, under the full persuasion that La Peña would remain, with Anglona's division and the cavalry, at Barosa; especially as a Spanish detachment was still on the side of Medina: scarcely however had the British entered the wood, when this dastardly wretch carried off all the troops toward the San Petri, directing the cavalry to follow by the coast road, and leaving the baggage on the Barosa heights, guarded only by five battalions and four guns. These movements were keenly watched by Victor in the forest of Chiclana, who felt so secure of victory, that he despatched his cavalry from Medina and Arcos toward Vejer and other places, for the purpose of intercepting the fugitives in their anticipated defeat: he had with him 9000 excellent troops, of the divisions of Laval, Ruffin, and Villatte: from these he drew three grenadier battalions, for reserves; of which he attached two, and three squadrons of cavalry, to Ruffin's division, that formed his left wing; and the remaining one to Laval's, which formed his centre;

CHAP.
LII.
1811.

Villatte's force, of about 2500 men, was kept near a bridge on the Almanza creek, to cover the camp, and to watch the Spaniards at the San Petri and Bermeja.

As soon as Victor saw that Graham had entered the wood, he put his troops into rapid motion, directing Laval against the English; while he himself, with Ruffin's division, ascending the reverse side of Barosa, cut off the Spanish detachment that was on the road to Medina, and utterly dispersed the rear-guard left with the baggage on the heights. Major Brown, unable to stem the torrent, sent quickly to Graham for orders; when that energetic officer, as if inspired by the genius of military command, answered, 'that he was to fight;' and himself, instantly facing about, regained the plain, expecting to find La Peña, with the main body of the army and the cavalry, on the heights: but La Peña was nowhere to be seen; the rear-guard and baggage were flying in confusion toward the coast; while the heights were covered with Ruffin's division, and the French cavalry; and Laval was close on his own left flank. In this hazardous situation, a general who had hesitated would inevitably have been lost: not so with Graham; who resolved instantly to attack his opponents, though the key of the field of battle was in their possession.

Battle of
Barosa.

Ten guns, under major Duncan, opened a terrific fire on Laval's column; while colonel A. Barnard, with the riflemen and Portuguese companies, running out to the left, commenced the engagement: the remainder of the British troops, without any attention to regiments or brigades, were formed into two masses; one of which, under general Dilke, marched hastily against Ruffin; and the other, under colonel Wheatley, moved toward Laval. While Duncan's guns thinned the French ranks, Laval's artillery replied vigorously; and Ruffin's batteries took Wheatley's column in flank, as the troops on each side passed onwards amid showers of musket balls: but when they came to close quarters, a rapid charge by the British overthrew the first

French line, and drove it in confusion on the second, which was instantaneously broken in the same manner, and driven from the field.

CHAP.
LII
1811.

Meanwhile, major Brown, on receiving his orders, had marched headlong against Ruffin, whose first fire brought down half his detachment: yet he bravely maintained the fight, till Dilke's column, crossing a deep hollow, and not stopping even to re-form its broken lines, joined him, and the whole rushed forward simultaneously toward the summit of the ridge: their gallant opponents met them at its edge, when a fierce, and for some time doubtful, conflict ensued; but the French generals, Ruffin and Rousseau, both fell, mortally wounded; and the troops, giving way under the incessant fire and pressing advance of the British, at length left the hill, with three guns and several hundreds of prisoners in possession of their antagonists.

The routed French divisions, meeting in their retreat, spiritedly attempted to re-form, and to renew the action; but this design was frustrated by the rapid and murderous play of Duncan's artillery: Victor then carried off his discomfited army from troops who were exhausted with fatigue and hunger, having been under arms twenty-four hours without food; and this he did in the face of a large train of Spanish artillery and a superb regiment of cavalry, 800 strong, by whom not a sabre was drawn that day, either in defence of their allies, or in pursuit of the flying enemy.

In this sanguinary conflict, which lasted only one hour and a half, fifty officers, sixty serjeants, and above 1100 British soldiers were killed or wounded; while their opponents lost 2000, together with six guns, an eagle, two generals, and 400 prisoners. After the action, Graham remained some hours on the heights, to see whether the flame of patriotism or courage could be kindled in the bosom of La Peña, who had been joined by 4000 troops and a powerful artillery from the Isla: but, alas! if there had been a spark existing there, it would have been extinguished by that unconquerable jealousy, which animated the Spanish generals against their brave allies: La Peña refused

CHAP.

LII.

1811.

to put 12,000 untouched troops in motion against the foes of his country, even in their flight. On the fifth, Victor, with great judgment and spirit, proposed to renew the attack; but was overruled by his council of war: next day, our troops filed over Zayas's bridge into the Isla; when admiral Keats, landing his seamen and marines, dismantled all the enemy's forts from Rota to Santa Maria, with the exception of Catalina. Great confusion prevailed in the French camp; and if La Peña, even then, would have pushed on toward Chiclana, the British admiral and general would have undertaken to demolish all the works of the Trocadero; but he still refused to serve his country, if by doing so he must add glory to the British arms: breaking down therefore the bridge over the San Petri, he retired to Algesiras; and, in an address to the Cortes, claimed all the merit of victory for himself! To such a pitch of audacity did his minions, Lascy and Cruz-Murgeon, proceed, that they published inaccurate accounts of the action, and had deceptive plans engraved to deceive the public.³ 'Graham,' as the peninsular historian observes, 'stung by these unworthy transactions, exposed the conduct of La Peña, in a letter to the British envoy; and when Lascy let fall some expressions personally offensive, he enforced an apology with his sword:' he then deputed his command to general Cooke, and carried his well-earned laurels to the great commander.

Capture of
Badajos by
the French.

While discord prevailed in Cadiz, Badajos held out under its admirable governor, Rafael Menacho, who had communicated a portion of his own courage and activity to the garrison: this brave man however having been slain, in a sally on the second of March, the command fell to Imas, one of the worst officers of La Peña's school: under him the spirit of the garrison died away; and a breach being made in the ramparts, the place was peremptorily summoned on the tenth: at this time, the great crisis of the campaign had passed, and a strong body of British and Portuguese were ready to raise the siege: in three different ways,

³ Napier, vol. iii. p. 449.

by telegraph, by letter, and by a confidential messenger, Imas was informed that Massena was in full retreat, and the relieving army on its march: the breach was still impracticable, the garrison above 8000 strong, and the French army reduced by sickness and the operations of war to 14,000. The sequel must be given in the words of the military historian:—‘Imas read the letter, and instantly surrendered; handing over to the enemy at the same moment the intelligence thus obtained; but he also demanded that his grenadiers should march out of the breach: it was granted; and he was obliged to enlarge the opening himself ere they could do so! Yet this man, so covered with opprobrium, and who had secured his own liberty while consigning his fellow soldiers to a prison, and his character to infamy, was never punished by the Spanish rulers! Lord Wellington’s indignant remonstrances forced them, indeed, to bring him to trial; but they made the process last the whole war.’

When Badajos fell, some other slight advantages were gained; but the victory of Barosa, and the success of Wellington’s grand combinations, forced Soult to return into Andalusia. During the siege, no alteration took place in the main positions of the French and British at Santarem, while our commander’s able project of relieving Badajos was frustrated by two untoward circumstances; the fatal action, under Mendizabel, at the Gebora; and the neglect of admiral sir Joseph Yorke, who, not taking advantage of a fair wind, when reinforcements were put on board his fleet, prolonged a voyage of ten days to one of six weeks. Every fault and failure however of others served only to display the fine qualities of lord Wellington’s mind, whose plans and combinations were too grand and comprehensive in their nature to be affected by petty accidents: on the retina of that mind lay the whole process of the war, as it were, in perspective; and it is said by those who knew the man, that few events of great importance occurred, which were not foreseen by his almost miraculous powers of anticipation.

Massena’s situation had now become so perilous, by

CHAP.
LII.

1811.
Retreat of
Massena.

a total interruption of his communications with the duke of Dalmatia, by the sickness which wasted his troops, the dissention existing between many of his generals, and the commencing disorganisation of his army, that he determined to retreat, when the occupation of his position ten more days would have enabled Soult to join him. Of the several lines open to his march, he chose that which led to the Mondego; determining either to pass that river, or to proceed along its left bank toward Guarda and Almeida; but he previously sent off all his invalids and stores, by a flank movement, executed with great ability. At first, he made an indication of despatching Ney, with the sixth corps and the cavalry, against Torres Vedras; and thus kept his antagonist in suspense: but after great destruction of its munitions of war, the army, by rapid concentric movements, and a gain of four days' time, occupied a position in front of Pombal, and secured its line of retreat; for lord Wellington, though well aware that such a retreat was intended, could take no decisive step, lest he should open his lines to the enemy: he had however ordered marshal Beresford to close up to his right on the fifth; and on the sixth, discovering the camp at Santarem to be empty, he put his own army in motion, one part in the direction of Thomar, the other in that of Leiria: but though Massena had commenced his march on the fourth, the eleventh arrived before sufficient forces could be assembled to engage him: during this interval, he had ably executed one of the most difficult movements in war, and had fully organised his retreat, unencumbered with any heavy artillery, but protected by a strong rear-guard, under Ney, who took advantage of every defensible post in the line of march.

A slight skirmish occurred at Pombal; where the French were driven from their position with such precipitation by the ninety-fifth regiment, and the third caçadores of the light division, that they had not time to blow up the bridge, although it was undermined. Montbrun was here detached, for the purpose of seizing Coimbra, which it was lord Wel-

lington's immediate object to save: he also determined to drive Massena out of Portugal, by skilful rather than daring operations; being unwilling to run the hazard of weakening his force by a direct attack; and content, if he could harass and disorganise the enemy, while he kept his own army intire for future operations in Spain: the country also was full of strong positions, and the weather favorable to a retreating enemy; while 'Ney, with a happy mixture of courage, readiness, and skill, illustrated every league of ground by some signal combination of war.'⁴ The combat of Redinha, on the twelfth, particularly displayed this marshal's military talents, where an ingenious arrangement of his troops deceived lord Wellington as to their numbers; and when the whole British army was rapidly advancing on his position, he drew off his troops with inconceivable rapidity and small loss: on the thirteenth, the allies renewed their pursuit, and soon discovered the whole French army, with the exception of the second corps, which was at Espinhal, in order of battle. The crisis of Massena's retreat, as colonel Napier observes, had now arrived: the defiles of Condeixa, leading on Coimbra, were behind him; those of Miranda de Corvo, leading to the Puente de Murcella, were on his left; and in the fork of these two roads, Ney was fixed, on a strong range of heights, covered by a marsh and various artificial obstructions, by which Massena expected to stop the British pursuit, while Montbrun occupied Coimbra: for he designed to pass the Mondego, and either capture Oporto, or maintain a position between that river and the Douro, till the arrival of Soult or Bessières should enable him to resume active operations.⁵ Coimbra however was saved principally by the skilful and daring measures of colonel Trant, assisted by sir Robert Wilson, and other independent corps: the French commander therefore directed his march on the Puente de Murcella; and though Wellington

⁴ Sir Thomas Picton also, whose division was principally engaged with the rear-guard of the French army, declared, that 'his movements afforded a perfect lesson in this kind of warfare.'—Life of Picton, vol. i. p. 385.

⁵ Napier, vol. iii. p. 464.

CHAP.
LII.

1811.

now assumed a more decided superiority over his antagonist, yet the retreat was still conducted with consummate skill, and extraordinary success. 'On the fourteenth,' says Picton, 'the light division was engaged with the enemy's rear-guard as early as half-past five o'clock in the morning; and there was a continual skirmish, without any intermission, till near four o'clock in the afternoon.'⁶ On the fifteenth, according to the same authority, another vehement attack was made by several British divisions; but the ground was particularly favorable to the retreating forces, consisting of abrupt woody heights, connected by narrow gorges, strongly occupied by infantry and artillery: they made therefore an obstinate resistance; but in the end were successfully driven from all their positions, till night covered their movements. The sixteenth was employed by our troops in reconnoitring the enemy; whose whole force was concentrated on a strong woody ridge, covered by a rapid and unfordable river: early the following night, however, he decamped, and by a forced march reached the Alva, which he passed at different fords, on the seventeenth, and the morning of the eighteenth. The British army was now obliged to relax in the vigor of its pursuit, on account of a deficiency of provisions; the commissariat not being able to keep pace with such rapid movements; and the enemy having consumed every thing in the country with fire and sword: here he also destroyed large quantities of baggage and ammunition; even abandoning his more distant foraging parties, which were intercepted and taken, to the number of 800 men, as they returned to the Alva.

While provisions were sent up the Mondego for our forces, the light division and cavalry continued to pursue Massena, who reached Celerico, on the twenty-first, with two corps, and all his horse; when he immediately opened a communication with Almeida, while Regnier occupied Guarda with the second corps. Having thus gained the original base of his operations, and feeling anxious not to re-enter Spain as a con-

⁶ Life of Picton, vol. i. p. 382.

quered general, he formed a design of throwing all his sick men and other encumbrances into Almeida; and then, passing the Estrella at Guarda, to advance through Sabagul and Peña Macor to the Elga: there he would have established communications across the Tagus with Soult, and along the valley of that river with the king: a close and concentric direction would have been given to the armies of the south, of the centre, and of Portugal; which, by making a demonstration against Lisbon, would have drawn Wellington back to the Tagus, while the northern army menaced the frontier. This plan however was strongly opposed by Ney; who, wishing to shorten the retreat, urged the necessity of falling back on Almeida; absolutely refusing to concur in Massena's project, and even moving his troops in a contrary direction: the latter then deprived that marshal of his command; and each sent a confidential officer to Paris to justify his conduct to Napoleon. From both those envoys, colonel Napier professes to have derived information; judging from which, as well as from other circumstances, he thinks that 'Massena's general views were as superior to those of Ney, as the latter's readiness and genius in the handling of troops in action were superior to the prince's.'

Though Ney's insubordination had frustrated Massena's plan of marching on the Elga, the latter still hoped to maintain a position at Guarda, by aid of the army of the south; and to hold open communications with Soult and the king: but Wellington's bold operations now disarranged his calculations.

Our troops had come up on the twenty-eighth; and together with them reinforcements, which were formed into a seventh division: on the twenty-ninth, by a skilful combination of movements, in which the third division, under Picton, bore a distinguished part, the enemy was dislodged from the heights and city of Guarda, though posted in great strength; and the gallant third, having turned Massena's left, took a strong position in his rear, within a quarter of a mile of head-quarters: this so alarmed him, and the absence

CHAP.
LII.

1811.

of Ney also was so strongly felt, that he quickly withdrew the corps opposed to the other divisions, and commenced his retreat with marks of great precipitation. Still unwilling to quit Portugal, Massena lost no opportunity of arresting the progress of his pursuers; and on the third of April he endeavored to make another stand on the Coa, which brought on the sharp action of Sabagul. Lord Wellington's dispositions, on this occasion, were made with distinguished ability; but one of those accidents, which so often disarrange military operations, marred his well-concerted schemes, and saved the French army: this arose from his instructions not being promptly and properly obeyed; so that colonel Beckwith's brigade of the light division, and four companies of the ninety-fifth, with two squadrons of cavalry, and three companies of caçadores, supported by the forty-third regiment, for a long time bore the brunt of the fight, against the main body of the enemy: these gallant troops, attacked on all sides, and occasionally compelled to give way before the overwhelming pressure of the opposing column, still recovered their ground by successive charges: thrice did the forty-third thus beat back solid masses and repel the attacks of cavalry, with a resolution and courage that could not be resisted: but all would have been vain; the whole of the enemy's force had been called up, and was about to close on this heroic little band, when firing was suddenly heard on their left: this was from Colville's brigade of the third division, led by Picton himself; and as they advanced up a hill to the point of attack, with stern front and steady step, the general ordered them not to fire a shot before he gave the word of command: and not a shot was fired, till they came within a few yards of the enemy's right: then a volley was poured in close and true; a loud cheer was caught up by Beckwith's almost exhausted troops, and the attack renewed with fresh energy: the head of general Dunlop's column also was now seen crossing the bridge of the Coa, against the French right; while our cavalry appeared on the rear of their left: the

columns under Regnier, which were advancing to apparent victory, then slowly withdrew from 'one of the most glorious contests to British troops,' according to lord Wellington's own words, 'in which they ever were engaged.' The retreat was now continued; and on the fifth, Massena crossed the frontier of Portugal, as a beaten general, for the purpose of taking refuge in Ciudad Rodrigo: but he acquired in this campaign a character for violence, cruelty, and devastation, unparalleled in the whole course of the war; and left his name to be execrated by the Portuguese, as long as any memorial of his acts shall exist. He had entered the country with 65,000 men; he had been reinforced with 10,000; and he repassed the frontier with 45,000, losing about 6000 in his retreat from Santarem.

From Ciudad Rodrigo, where supplies were obtained, and detachments joined his broken army, Massena fell back to Salamanca; whilst his antagonist invested Almeida, sending the militia to their homes, and disposing his army between the Coa and the Agueda: beyond that river he could not take a position; for the Portuguese regulars were in a sad state, and daily decreasing in numbers; while the misconduct of the regency still continued, and little or no money could be procured. Entertaining however grand projects for the future, he demanded reinforcements from England, and leave to carry his designs into execution, if proper opportunities should occur: 'yet,' says colonel Napier, 'he checked his secret aspirations, reflecting on the national pride and perverseness of the Spaniards, their uncertain proceedings, and the great difficulty, if not impossibility, of ensuring any reasonable concert and assistance. When to this he added the bad disposition of the Portuguese regency, and the timid temper of the English ministers, so many jarring elements presented themselves, that he could make no fixed combinations: nevertheless, maturing the leading points of action in his own mind, he resolved to keep them in view, adapting his proceedings to circumstances as they should arise.'⁷ 'So deeply, how-

⁷ Napier, vol. iii. p. 492.

CHAP.
LII.

1811.

ever,' says the same writer, 'had he probed the nature of the contest, that we shall find his future operations strictly conformable to his first conceptions; and always successful.'

As the capture of Badajos bore strongly on all his plans, he left the investment of Almeida to general Spencer, and departed for the Alemtejo, there to confer with marshal Beresford, who had the conduct of operations in that quarter. After the fall of Badajos, Soult had returned to Andalusia, leaving the siege of Campo Mayor to be conducted by Mortier; who, having effected this achievement, returned to the Guadiana, leaving Latour Maubourg to dismantle the place, and remove its guns and stores to Badajos. Such was the state of affairs, when Beresford, who had been detached from our northern army during its pursuit of the French, arrived at Portalegre with 20,000 infantry, 2000 cavalry, and eighteen pieces of artillery. So secretly had this force been prepared, and so expeditiously sent by lord Wellington, that Campo Mayor was recovered before the enemy had time to remove all the stores: they also evacuated Albuquerque and Valencia d'Alcantara; but marshal Beresford, though a very gallant soldier, does not seem to have possessed those strategic talents, which would have enabled him to keep pace with the designs of the great captain. It is stated, on high military authority, that if, profiting by the consternation which the appearance of his vast force caused, and by the weakness of Mortier's corps, from which Soult had abstracted large detachments, he had marched on Merida, driven back the fifth corps, and opened a fresh communication with Elvas by Jerumenha, Badajos must have fallen; for its breach was not closed, nor its magazines replenished:⁸ the fatigues however and wants of his soldiers induced the marshal to put them into quarters around Elvas, where the Portuguese government had promised to provide them with sustenance, in order that they might undertake the siege of Olivenza and Badajos: he found however that the

⁸ Napier, vol. iii. p. 497.

Portuguese regency made promises, only to betray its allies; for no provisions were collected in the country, nor any means of transport for the troops to cross the river: Beresford therefore halted till he could procure means of passing it at Jerumenha; 'an error,' says colonel Napier, 'which may be considered as the first and principal cause of those long and bloody operations, which afterwards detained lord Wellington nearly two years on the frontiers of Portugal;'⁹ for during this delay, Badajos was fortified by Phillipon, and its magazines stored by the foraging parties of Latour Maubourg. On the fifth and sixth of April, the army, after great difficulties, crossed the Guadiana; and on the seventh, the French general came up, with a strong corps, to oppose a passage that had been already effected: he however surprised an advanced squadron of cavalry, and then came so close to the British position as to exchange shots; but was suffered to retire unmolested. During these proceedings, the Spanish armies, under Blake and Castaños took the field, both jealous of each other, and also of Beresford; but the latter, being joined by Madden's cavalry, marched against Latour Maubourg, who retired on Llerena; when the marshal, leaving a considerable force under general Cole to besiege Olivenza, took post at Albuera, communicating by his left with Almendralejo, and spreading his cavalry in front so as to cut off all communication with Badajos. On the fifteenth, Olivenza surrendered; and after some movements, intended to drive Latour Maubourg over the Morena, and to cut off general Maransin, who was in pursuit of Ballasteros, whom he had defeated at Tregenal, the whole army was concentrated on the sixteenth about Zafra: Latour Maubourg retired to Guadalcanal; and Llerena was occupied by the Spanish cavalry. On the twenty-first, Wellington arrived at the Guadiana; and next day, having forded it with Madden's cavalry, and a brigade of German light infantry under general Charles Alten, he pushed up close to Badajos, and endeavored, but without success,

⁹ Napier, vol. iii. p. 499.

CHAP.
LII.
1811.

to cut off a convoy then about to enter the town. His lordship, knowing well that Soult would endeavor to interrupt the siege, refused to invest the place, until he had received the promise of the Spanish generals, Blake, Ballasteros, and Castaños, to take up prominent positions, which he marked out; Albuera being the point of concentration for the allied forces, in the event of a battle: political differences however, added to the natural slowness and arrogance of those officers, delayed operations: in the mean time, intelligence arrived, that Massena, reinforced by the army of the north, and the ninth corps, had re-appeared on the Agueda: directing Beresford therefore to postpone the siege until unanimity should prevail, or the fall of Almeida should permit him to send reinforcements, Wellington returned with speed to his army: having joined it on the twenty-eighth, he immediately concentrated its main force behind the Dos Casas river; being resolved neither to seek nor to decline a battle.

On the second of May, Massena, quitting Ciudad Rodrigo, and pushing his whole army across the Agueda, attempted to force a passage to Almeida. The allies occupied a fine table-land, lying between the rivers Turones and Dos Casas; their left resting on Fort Conception, their centre being opposite to the village of Almeida, and their right near Fuentes Onoro: the front of this extensive line was protected by the Dos Casas, flowing in a deep ravine. Much skirmishing took place on the evening of the third of May at Fuentes Onoro, which was occupied by five chosen battalions of the first and third divisions. General Loison, without waiting for Massena's orders, attacked these troops with a superior force; but was bravely met and kept in check, until their commander, colonel Williams, of the sixtieth, fell severely wounded: the enemy's efforts were nearly crowned with success, when the twenty-fourth, the seventy-first, and the seventy-ninth regiments, coming down from the main position, made a spirited charge, and drove them from the village for the night.

Massena arrived on the fourth; which day he passed

in reconnoitring, and making dispositions for a more general engagement: being now joined by Bessières with 1200 cavalry and a battalion of the imperial guard, he had under arms 40,000 infantry and 5000 horse, with thirty pieces of artillery. On the morning of the fifth, a furious attack was made on our right by the cavalry under Montbrun, which very severely handled the light division: but the chief share of the combat fell to the third under Picton, which, for its extreme bravery and gallant exertions on every occasion, had acquired in the army the appellation of 'the fighting division.' The village of Fuentes Onoro was again the main object of contention; Drouet being ordered to carry it at the moment when Montbrun's cavalry should turn the British right wing: a delay however of two hours occurred, and the place was defended in the most determined manner by the same gallant regiments which sustained the unequal combat of yesterday; and that, against repeated assaults, supported by a tremendous cannonade: about two o'clock, however, these troops began to give way and to fall back behind the village; when the eighty-eighth, under colonel Wallace, led on by major-general Mackinnon, moved up to support them, making so overwhelming a charge through the streets, that the enemy was driven out with immense loss; though he still kept up a heavy, but not very destructive cannonade, at a distance.

CHAP.
LII.
—
1811.
Battle of
Fuentes
Onoro.

When the action ceased, both armies remained in observation: on the sixth, the French general sent his wounded men to the rear, without making any demonstration of attack; while lord Wellington completed some intrenchments to defend his position. As great insubordination existed among his principal officers, Massena recrossed the Agueda on the tenth, and soon afterwards returned to France, being superseded in his command by Marmont, who had lately been created duke of Ragusa.

Almeida was now left to its fate; but the skilful and daring conduct of its governor, general Brennier, allowed very little honor to be acquired by its captors.

CHAP.
LII.
1811.

After blowing up the fortifications and destroying the guns¹⁰ in so ingenious a manner as to elude all notice of the blockading regiments, he succeeded in breaking through them with his garrison; which, after a slight loss, effected a junction with the second corps under Regnier. Marmont then withdrew the greater part of his army to Salamanca; and Wellington set out for Badajos, leaving four divisions, under general Spencer, and directing the third and seventh, with the second German hussars, to follow him. During his absence in the north, marshal Beresford, having obtained the acquiescence of the Spanish generals, had invested that important fortress; but to the great discredit of our own government, no army ever was so ill provided with materials for a siege: the engineer officers were men of high talent and zeal; but, without proper tools and cannon of sufficient calibre, without a single corps of sappers and miners, or a private who knew how to carry on approaches under fire, they were opposed to the most numerous, scientific, and warlike set of men that any age or nation ever produced: omitting, however, the description of this unsuccessful operation, let us proceed to notice those movements on the side of Andalusia, which drew the allies from the besieged fortress. Soult, having had time to re-organise that province after the disasters attendant on the battle of Barosa, and to collect a powerful reinforcement, suddenly advanced; and, being joined on his march by general Maransin and Latour Maubourg, arrived on the fifteenth of May at Santa Marta, about twenty-four miles distant from Badajos. Beresford remained till the night of the twelfth, in a state of much uncertainty; and then, contrary to the advice of his engineer officers, who promised to put him in possession

¹⁰ He fired several guns at the same time, with very heavy charges, placing one across the muzzle of the other; so that while some shots flew toward the besiegers, and a loud explosion was heard, others destroyed pieces of cannon without attracting notice: and for two days he continued this work of destruction, blowing up his mines and issuing from Almeida about one o'clock in the morning of the 11th of May. The way was opened by the bayonet, when they boldly passed between our picquets; and though pursued by generals Pack and Campbell, they continued their march in a compact body, without firing; and were well guided through the positions held by our troops.

of the place within three days, he determined to raise the siege: for this determination, he has received great praise from colonel Napier, who observes, that the promise was ill-founded; and if it had been otherwise, Soult would have surprised him in the trenches:¹¹ his firmness, therefore, in this instance, saved the army; and having skilfully removed his battering train to the right bank of the Guadiana, he held a conference with the Spanish generals, on the thirteenth, at Valverde, where it was resolved to meet the foe at Albuera: this resolution, however, has not been thought intitled to the same applause; for he had only 7000 British troops to act against a superb army of French veterans; his main object could have been attained without a battle; while a defeat would have drawn lord Wellington again within the lines of Torres Vedras, and let a tremendous army into Portugal, to the probable ruin of the peninsula. The corps under Ballasteros and Blake, which had united at Baracotta, were now falling back on Almendral; and Blake engaged to bring them into line before noon on the fifteenth: but, alas! the arrogance, inactivity, and incapacity of this man occasioned torrents of the best British blood to flow. On the morning of the fifteenth, a position was taken on a ridge about four miles long, sloping down toward the river of Albuera in front; and at three o'clock in the afternoon, the whole of the allied cavalry were driven in, passing the stream, and abandoning a woody height on the other side; which, being unoccupied, enabled Soult to mask his principal dispositions for battle. At that time, the fourth division had not come up from Badajos, where it appears to have been imprudently left; and Blake's movements were so slow, that he did not reach the ground assigned to him, on the right of the line, before eleven at night; nor was his rear in a position before three next morning: orders were sent to hasten Cole and Madden, the former of whom brought up two brigades of the fourth division, with the infantry of the fifth Spanish army, and two squadrons of Portu-

CHAP.
LII.
1811.

¹¹ Napier, vol. iii. p. 529.

CHAP.
LII.

1811.

Battle of
Albuera.

guese cavalry; which latter were sent to reinforce our countrymen, under colonel Otway, on the left of the line; while the Spaniards joined Blake on the right. Soult having, on the evening of the fifteenth, examined and detected the weak points in his adversary's line, placed a very strong force behind the wooded height above-mentioned, for the purpose of turning the right wing of the allies, and driving it back on their centre. The battle commenced at an early hour on the sixteenth, by an attempt of the French division under Godinot, to cross the bridge before Albuera, where they suffered much from the well-directed fire of our artillery: but Beresford soon discovered that the main attack was to be directed against his right wing, and therefore he sent Blake directions to make a change in his front, for the purpose of meeting it: this order the arrogant Spaniard refused to obey, telling colonel Hardinge that the real attack was at the bridge: the marshal, therefore, after sending another message as vainly as the former, was obliged himself to gallop to Blake's post, where nothing had been done: the enemy's dense columns, however, had already emerged from the wood; and before Beresford could make the necessary evolutions, were close on our right wing: their artillery then opened; their infantry poured in a destructive fire; and their cavalry, outflanking the front, put the Spaniards into the utmost disorder. Soult, thinking that the whole allied army was yielding, pushed forward his columns, while his reserves mounted the hill, and his batteries were placed in position: but at this crisis, general William Stewart arrived with colonel Colborne's brigade, from the second division: the colonel, who was not surpassed by Ney himself in the management of troops in action, desired to form in order of battle before they ascended the hill; but the general, whose impetuous courage, at this moment, blinded his judgment, led up in column, and endeavored to deploy into line as the battalions arrived at the summit: a fatal error! for the heavy rain, now falling, enabled four regiments of hussars and lancers to pass the right flank without

observation: these came rushing on the rear of our line at the very instant of its development; and one battalion only, which had not deployed, remained unbroken. Dreadful was the slaughter that ensued, while French and Polish horsemen rode violently over the field, putting to death all stragglers, and piercing the wounded, who had fallen, with their long and terrible spears: in this tumult, the British commander in chief was himself encountered by a lancer; but being endowed with great personal strength and courage, he parried the thrust, and unhorsed his assailant: he would have spared the man, but his life was instantly taken by a soldier. During this time, the Spanish line continued to fire, though the British were before them; yet no exhortations of Beresford could induce them to advance, though he seized an ensign, and carried him with his colors by main force toward the enemy: Soult, however, being prevented by the weather from seeing accurately the state of things, kept his heavy columns together; while his cavalry was checked in its attempt to hem in that of the allies, by general Lumley, with the able assistance of the horse artillery: Colborne also still maintained the heights with the thirty-first regiment; Stewart, who had escaped the spears of the lancers, was leading general Houghton's brigade up the hill, in a better order of battle; and Soult found, to his cost, that the day was still to be won.

As soon as Houghton's regiments arrived on the summit, major Dickson placed our artillery in line; the surviving brigade of the second division came up on the left; and two Spanish corps being at last persuaded to move, the fight was vigorously renewed: general Stewart was twice wounded, but refused to quit the field; colonel Duckworth, of the forty-eighth, was slain; and the gallant Houghton fell in the act of cheering his men: such, however, was the slaughter in our ranks, that scarcely one-third in each regiment, that had mounted the hill, remained unhurt: the enemy was for a time checked by Dickson's artillery; but the Polish lancers again charged, and captured six

CHAP.
LII.

1811.

of his guns. At this dreadful crisis, it is said that marshal Beresford, having exhausted all his personal resources, meditated a retreat; but before the fatal order was given, some of his staff urged the possibility of recovering the day with general Cole's two brigades of the fourth division; one consisting of Portuguese, under general Harvey; the other of British fusileers, under sir William Myers. While the commander hesitated, colonel Hardinge¹² boldly undertook to order Cole's advance; and then, riding up to colonel Abercrombie, who commanded the remnant of the second division, directed him to continue the contest: the die was thus cast, and Beresford acquiesced.¹³

At this time, when six British guns were in possession of the enemy, whose reserves were coming fast up, and all the field was in confusion, Cole's fusileers, flanked by a battalion of the Lusitanian legion, ascended the hill, dispersed the lancers, recaptured the guns, and appeared on the right of Houghton's brigade, as Abercrombie passed it on the left: the contest that ensued is described by the peninsular historian in language that demands insertion, while it defies emulation:—'Such a gallant line,' he says, 'issuing from the midst of the smoke, and rapidly separating itself from the confused and broken multitude, startled the enemy's heavy masses, which were increasing, and pressing onwards, as to an assured victory: they wavered, hesitated; and then, vomiting forth a storm of fire, hastily endeavored to enlarge their front, while a fearful discharge of grape from all their artillery whistled through the British ranks. Myers was killed; Cole, and the three colonels, Ellis, Blakeney, and Hawkshawe, fell wounded; and the fusileer battalions, struck by the iron tempest, reeled and staggered like sinking ships: but suddenly and sternly recovering, they closed on their terrible enemies; and then was seen with what strength and majesty a British soldier fights: in vain did Soult, by voice and gesture, animate his Frenchmen; in vain did the hardest veterans,

¹² Now governor-general of British India.

¹³ Napier, vol. iii. p. 533.

extricating themselves from the crowded columns, sacrifice their lives to gain time for the mass to open out on such a fair field; in vain did the mass itself bear up, and, fiercely striving, fire indiscriminately on friends and foes; while horsemen, hovering on the flank, threatened to charge our advancing line. Nothing could stop that astonishing infantry: no sudden burst of undisciplined valor, no nervous enthusiasm, weakened the stability of their order: their flashing eyes were bent on the dark columns in front; their measured tread shook the ground; their dreadful volleys swept away the head of every formation; their deafening shouts overpowered the dissonant cries that broke from all parts of the tumultuous crowd; as foot by foot, and with a horrid carnage, it was driven by the incessant vigor of the attack to the farthest edge of the hill. In vain did the French reserves, joining with the struggling multitude, endeavor to sustain the fight: their efforts only increased the irremediable confusion; and the mighty mass, giving way like a loosened cliff, went headlong down the ascent: the rain flowed after in streams, discolored with blood; and 1500 unwounded men, the remnant of 6000 unconquerable British soldiers, stood triumphant on the fatal hill.'

Colonel Hardinge's decision having brought on a crisis, Beresford exerted himself to improve it; and Blake's first line, which had not yet been engaged, was ordered on the village: this movement permitted Alten's German and other troops to come up to the right; but so rapid was the execution of the fusileers, that the enemy's infantry were never touched by these reinforcements; which nevertheless suffered severely from the French artillery under general Ruty: meanwhile, the contest was obstinately continued at the village; though, after the complete defeat of his grand attack, Soult withdrew Godinot's division from that quarter also. In this short, but sanguinary battle, five French generals, with 8000 other officers and men, were either killed or wounded: on the other side, 2000 Spaniards, with 600 Germans and Portuguese,

CHAP.
LII.

1811.

were put *hors de combat*; but of pure British troops only 1500 were left standing out of 6000! the rest were found lying, as they had fought, in their ranks; more slain than all that fell in lord Wellington's campaign against Massena. The whole night long a deluge of rain came down, while the ravines and wooded hills, on each side of the river, resounded with shrieks and groans from dying men; but Beresford had not a sufficient number of British unhurt to attend his wounded soldiers. In these distressing circumstances, he sent to Blake to ask assistance; but the monster refused it, saying; 'it was customary with allied armies for each to take care of its own men.'¹⁴ Next day, both generals maintained their respective stations: the French, whose loss was far less serious than that of their opponents, were still menacing; and Beresford in great agitation expected another attack: with consummate judgment, however, he kept his position; and was joined on the seventeenth by the third brigade of the fourth division: on the eighteenth, to his infinite joy, Soult took the unwise step of retreating toward Llerena; and the same day lord Wellington arrived, inspected the state of affairs, and, returning to Elvas, directed the third and seventh divisions, which had arrived at Campo Mayor, to complete the investment of Badajos: so inadequate, however, were his means, that it became a jest in the army to say, that he was suing Badajos *in forma pauperis*. Under the direction, however, of that admirable officer, major Dickson, a battering train was got together; general Hill took the command of the covering army; the cavalry was pushed forward to observe Soult; and, on the twenty-ninth, ground was broken before this important place: on the sixth of June, a breach in Fort Cristoval was reported practicable, and an assault was ordered at midnight: it was both given and repelled with intrepidity; three fruitless attempts being made to scale the wall: time now pressed; the French armies were moving into position, and another assault was determined on: the breach having been again battered, a

¹⁴ Napier, vol. iii. p. 544.

larger storming party, better provided than the former, boldly attempted it; but this also was driven back with still greater loss: on the tenth, therefore, lord Wellington removed his stores, and turned the siege into a blockade; for he discovered by an intercepted letter that the provisions of the garrison were nearly exhausted, and he determined to try the chances of war. In the mean time, Marmont, having provided for the defence of Ciudad Rodrigo, was advancing, in pursuance of the emperor's instructions, to support Soult on the Guadiana; and the latter marshal, being reinforced by Drouet, prepared once more to relieve Badajos. On the fourteenth, it was known that Marmont was at Truxillo, and could reach Soult in four days: the blockade therefore was raised; but Wellington, hoping to engage Soult separately, still lingered at Albuera, where he intrenched his camp, and took care to occupy a hill on the right, of which his antagonist had once taken so great an advantage: the duke of Dalmatia's caution, however, frustrated this design; on the seventeenth the allies recrossed the river, and two days afterwards Badajos was relieved.

Lord Wellington now placed his army in a very advantageous position between the rivers Caya and Gebora; while his opponents were quartered along the Guadiana, above and below Badajos: a great crisis seemed to be at hand: the French armies were far superior to the British, especially in cavalry; while the Portuguese regency had reduced their contingents to the lowest degree of misery by starvation, and had utterly neglected all the fortresses of the country. The enemy had nearly deserted Andalusia, Castile, and the Asturias, to collect together their present overwhelming force; their generals were men of first-rate talent; and a victory at this time would have sent lord Wellington to Lisbon, if not out of the peninsula: but they felt the weight of moral over physical force; their defeats were still recent; they knew the constitution of British troops; and they were well aware that a general now commanded them, who would give his opponents no advantage in military

CHAP.
LII.

1811.

manœuvres: when lord Wellington, therefore, who neither urged nor declined a combat, had waited long enough to allow the Spaniards an opportunity of rising against their oppressors in the evacuated provinces, he despatched Blake against Seville; but that wretched commander, instead of occupying, as he might, the capital of Andalusia, wasted his time against the fortress of Niebla, which he could not take through want of artillery: yet Soult, fearing for the province, withdrew his army to the banks of the Guadalquivir: Marmont then, retiring gradually from before Badajos, quartered his troops in the valley of the Tagus, with the exception of one division left at Truxillo; at the same time, the fifth corps retired on Zafra, and Wellington found himself relieved from the presence of his antagonists, when he had most reason to fear their exertions: his troops, however, were now suffering so much from the terrible fever of the Guadiana, that this alone would have prevented him from resuming the siege of Badajos at present, if other reasons had not induced him to adopt a new system of operations.

Operations
in Cata-
lonia and
Valencia.

In Catalonia, Suchet had stormed Tarragona, with circumstances of cruelty calculated to strike terror into the fortresses of Valencia and Murcia, against which he was making large preparations: powerful reinforcements were advancing by the northern line from France; and as no efforts had been made by the Spaniards to shake off the French yoke, while Soult and Marmont were detained on the banks of the Guadiana; these generals were left at liberty to plan an enterprise, under the direction of Napoleon, calculated to change the whole aspect of the war. In the mean time, the weakness and anarchy of the Spaniards were daily increasing; and the faction in Portugal, which was called a government, carried its insolence toward the English, as well as its peculation and cruelty toward the natives, to such a height, that lord Wellington, having drawn up clear statements of his grievous situation, sent one to the Brazils, and the other to his own government; with a strong intimation, that unless a new system were adopted, he would

resign his command. The marquis Wellesley made strenuous efforts in both countries to support his brother, who had to contend with difficulties that would have overwhelmed any common man; for the Souzas employed spies about his person, and misrepresented both his actions and his motives to the government of Rio Janeiro: with respect to the war, however, he had penetrated the enemy's project; and did not despair of baffling it, if he could overcome political embarrassments: to Portugal he still looked, as to a strong citadel, which would be impregnable, if he could gain firm possession of its resources; and these he hoped by his brother's assistance to obtain; when he might either strike partial blows against the French, or oblige them to concentrate their forces. Confident in his own genius and the valor of his troops, he felt that he could hold his foes, even so concentrated, in check, while the Spaniards ruined the small posts in their rear, cut off supplies, and disorganised the provincial administrations.

Having therefore deliberately formed his plans, he determined to leave sir Rowland Hill, with 10,000 infantry, a division of cavalry, and four brigades of artillery, in a position about Portalegre and Villa Viciosa, well covered against attack; and with a retreat secured either on Abrantes, or on the communications with Beira: the rest of his army he placed in good quarters at Castello de Vide, and other places near the Tagus; partly to escape the Guadiana fever, and partly to oppose Marmont's movements: it was not long however before he arranged offensive measures; though the positions of the French armies, and the misconduct of the Portuguese regency, left him no means of undertaking any extensive operations. Ignorant of the great strength of the army of the north, he determined to attack Ciudad Rodrigo, and hoped to capture it before Marmont could come to its assistance: having therefore secretly prepared a large battering train, which was transported up the Douro, to Lamego, he broke up his camp, and arrived with his main force on the Coa, about the eighth of

CHAP.
LII.

1811.

August: on the sixth, however, supplies had been thrown into Ciudad Rodrigo, sufficient for two months; accordingly, the troops were quartered near the sources of the Coa and Agueda, close to the line of communication between Marmont and Dorsenne, who commanded the army of the north: preparations for the siege went on briskly, until Wellington discovered the strength of the northern army, from which more than 20,000 disposable forces could be drawn: as his plans were based on calculations unconnected with this force, which, if Galicia had been under a good administration, never would have existed, he was obliged to turn the siege into a blockade, and wait for events. In the mean time, his military chest was totally exhausted; even the wages of the muleteers, on whose fidelity and efficiency the war absolutely depended, were six months in arrear; and disputes with the regency were more acrimonious than ever; since that stupid government, thinking the fate of Portugal secure, had deprived Mr. Stuart of his seat at the council, and was actually devising means to get rid of the British army.¹⁵ At this period, an opinion, which was strengthened by intercepted letters, prevailed in Spain, that Napoleon was coming to resume the command of his armies; when our commander, with characteristic prudence, turned his thoughts again toward the impregnable lines of Torres Vedras; requiring of the regency, that the roads and bridges, broken up by Massena's retreat, should be repaired: but they disregarded all his representations; and as the season was remarkably wet, the roads became nearly impassable; so that fortune favored the British army, in directing the emperor's attention to more distant objects.

In the midst of these cares, lord Wellington was suddenly called into action. Ciudad Rodrigo having been blockaded six weeks, and its provisions beginning to fail, Marmont and Dorsenne put their forces in motion, and met, on the twenty-first of September, at Tamames: their united armies amounted to about

¹⁵ Napier, vol. iv. p. 230.

60,000 men, including 6000 cavalry, with 100 pieces of artillery; while the force under the British commander was not more than 50,000; and some portion of that was necessarily occupied in the close investment of Rodrigo: his position also was weak, on account of its great extent; his centre, under Picton, resting on the heights of Pastores and El Bodon; his right wing being posted beyond the Agueda, and behind the Vadillo; and his left, under Graham, at Espeja, on the Lower Azava. On the twenty-fourth, the fourth division was brought up to Guinaldo, the pivot of future operations; the fifth remaining at St. Payo, to watch the passes of Estremadura.

CHAP.
LII.
1811.

On the twenty-fifth, the enemy were in motion by daybreak, to attack the centre of the allies; when fourteen battalions, with thirty squadrons and twelve guns, under Montbrun, came thundering over the plain, by the road leading to Guinaldo. As the seventy-fourth and sixtieth regiments, stationed at Pastores, were too far distant to be called in, and Picton, with three other regiments at El Bodon, could not immediately join the combat, Wellington ordered a brigade of the fourth division from Guinaldo, and directed general Colville to draw up the seventy-seventh and fifth British regiments, with the twenty-first Portuguese, and two brigades of their artillery, on the hill over which the road to Guinaldo passed, supporting their flanks with Alten's three squadrons of horse. Fortunately, the impetuosity of the French cavalry led them so much in advance of their infantry, that they had for a long time to contend alone against the allies: after galloping over the plain, and crossing a ravine, under fire of the Portuguese artillery, they charged vehemently up a steep rocky causeway, regardless of the numbers that were struck down by a storm of shot: still they persevered; but at the summit they were checked by the German troopers, who, though few in number, being favored by the nature of the ground, boldly charged the heads of the ascending masses. Montbrun, however, resolute to win, brought up his artillery; under cover of which, his horsemen

CHAP.
LII.

1811.

gained ground, and then pushed on with such rapidity, that the Portuguese artillerymen were sabred, and their guns captured, before the smoke had cleared away sufficiently to show the enemy on the summit. At this critical moment, the fifth regiment, under major Ridge, a daring son of Mars, deployed suddenly into line; and having poured a volley into the French cavalry, dashed at them with the bayonet, and retook the artillery, which again opened its fire: but although this novel experiment was for a time successful, Montbrun still pressed onward with fresh masses against our left flank, while other squadrons penetrated between the right and the village of El Bodon, from which Picton was with difficulty bringing up his troops: the expected brigade of the fourth division had not made its appearance; the French infantry was rapidly approaching; and the danger was now imminent; when lord Wellington ordered both Colville and Picton to fall back, and unite in the plain: the former instantly threw his two regiments into a square, which however was exposed to attack on all sides; the cavalry came thundering on them; but in vain did the gallant squadrons charge those steady veterans, whose volleys thinned their ranks, and whose bayonets presented an insuperable barrier against every assault.

Arrived at the plain, they were joined by the forty-fifth, the seventy-fourth, and the eighty-eighth regiments under Picton, who placed himself at the head of his division, and led it off under the most critical and trying circumstances imaginable: Montbrun with fifteen squadrons pressed closely on its right, endeavoring to impede its movements, till the arrival of his infantry and artillery, of which he had only one battery in the field. Picton saw that nothing but the most rapid and orderly march could save his men from annihilation: the enemy's horse never quitted them for an instant; while a *parc* of six guns, taking them on the flank and rear, was pouring in a terrible fire of round-shot, grape, and canister. Marching on the left of the column, he calmly exhorted his men to mind the

quarter distance, and 'the telling off:'—'Your safety,' he added, 'my credit, and the honor of the army, all rest with you at this moment.' Each battalion had in turn to form a rear-guard, in order to repel the enemy's advance; and then, after a volley, to fall back in double quick time behind that which was in its rear: nothing is more trying to troops than this evolution without cavalry; since the least unsteadiness in forming, or irregularity in retreat, may lead to the instant destruction of the whole force: about four o'clock in the evening, this brave band gained the intrenched camp, near Guinaldo, and the danger was at an end: by its retreat, however, the seventy-fourth and sixtieth regiments at Pastores were deserted; but these also, having crossed the Agueda by a ford, happily reached their comrades in the night. Next day, Marmont brought up a tremendous force against the position; which lord Wellington maintained, because he would not abandon his light division, under Craufurd, which did not arrive till three o'clock in the afternoon; and the French general, not being well acquainted with the true situation of his antagonist, forbore to bring on a combat: Wellington therefore in the night drew off his army into a new position, between the Coa and the sources of the Agueda; from that moment, Marmont never recovered the opportunity of success; and when he discovered the true state of affairs, he is said to have exclaimed, in allusion to Napoleon's fortune, 'Wellington's star also is bright.' The fourth division, under general Cole, was left at Aldea de Ponte, to which place the duke of Ragusa pressed his advance next day, when a short, but desperate conflict took place for that village, which, after much hard fighting, remained with the British: that same night, the allies again retreated to a strong and defensible line behind Soita, where both their flanks were protected by the Coa. Marmont, instead of pursuing them, resolved to retrace his steps to the valley of the Tagus, contented with having relieved Ciudad Rodrigo, and driven its besiegers from the walls: the example of

CHAP.
LII.

1811.

Massena was sufficient to deter him from a campaign in Portugal.

The allied army now went into cantonments, and Lord Wellington took this opportunity of collecting such materials as would enable him to carry Ciudad Rodrigo by a more rapid method than that of blockade. In October, a singular event occurred: the troop of Don Julian Sanchez, a celebrated guerilla chieftain, going to an ambuscade, fell in with the cattle belonging to the garrison; when general Regnaud, the governor, happening to be near at hand with a small escort of cavalry, charged the marauders, and was taken prisoner: the cattle were hailed as a most desirable acquisition by the soldiers; whose camp was not overstocked with provisions: but a still more valuable capture was made in the south by sir Rowland Hill, in a brilliant attack on the division of general Girard, who had crossed the Guadiana at Merida, and was annoying the northern district of Estremadura. General Hill, having procured lord Wellington's consent, took measures for driving him from his position at Caceres, and forcing him to recross the river; in consequence of which the French retreated before the British commander, who followed them as rapidly as the wretched state of the weather permitted; but was unable to obtain information of their route, until he fortunately discovered it himself at Malpartida, where he rested to give some repose to his fatigued troops. Having resumed his march to intercept his retiring foes by a shorter road, he ascertained, that being entirely unaware of his approach, they were resting at a place called Arroyo de Molinos; where he determined to surprise, or at least bring them to an action. After a long forced march, made with incredible patience and secrecy by his harrassed soldiers, he arrived on the evening of the 17th of October at Alcuescar, within four miles of his antagonist's position, who was quite unconscious of danger. Every precaution was taken by the British commander: the light companies were thrown into the villages to

prevent their inhabitants from alarming the enemy; while the other troops were stationed around them, with strict orders not to light a single fire during the whole rainy and tempestuous night. Their British hearts however were cheered and warmed by the hope of victory; and the first streaks of dawn were scarcely visible in the horizon, when the different columns fell in without the note of a bugle, or the beat of a single drum. After filing quietly through the villages, and crossing an intervening mountain, they found themselves, as day began to break, about half a mile from Arroyo de Molinos, when a violent hail storm suddenly coming on, occasioned the French piquets to turn away their faces from their advancing foes: as the decisive moment however approached, the sky became clear; one of the enemy's brigades had marched off, and the rest were preparing to follow, when a rapid movement of the British troops took place; the first brigade being led against the village of Arroyo by sir Rowland Hill himself, the second under general Howard moving quietly round to the other side of the place for the purpose of intercepting the expected fugitives, while the cavalry advanced between them ready to take advantage of circumstances. Presently the 71st and 92nd regiments charged rapidly down the street, driving the enemy before them at the point of the bayonet, after a feeble attempt at resistance by the French cavalry: their infantry, however, having emerged from the village endeavoured to form two squares under the protection of cavalry on their left; but the 71st regiment, lining some garden walls, poured into them a destructive fire, which was augmented by that of artillery: the confusion thence arising soon ended in flight on one side, and in a memorable pursuit on the other. Just behind the routed forces rose the steep and rocky Sierra de Montanches, up which they endeavoured to clamber, throwing away their arms and all other incumbrances, and yielding themselves prisoners whenever they were overtaken. In the excitement of such a chase the pursuers seemed to forget all the troubles of the pre-

CHAP.

LII.

1811.

ceding night, laughing, shouting, leaping about in their heavy accoutrements, and seizing on men or horses at almost every step; until they were stopped at the very edge of the Sierra by general Howard's brigade. The capture of nearly 1,500 prisoners, among whom were several of high rank, signalized this brilliant achievement. Lieut. Blakeney, of the 28th, having leaped over a wall took the prince d'Aremberg from the midst of a group of officers: general Brun also was taken, as well as three colonels, and about thirty inferior officers; although Girard himself, with a few followers, escaped over the bridge of Medellin, declaring that he would die sooner than surrender. Leaving behind him his baggage and artillery, he joined Drouet's corps at Zafra, while the British general returned to his old quarters; after a loss of about seventy men killed or wounded: but the report of Girard's disaster set all the French corps in motion; and every thing seemed to indicate the design of a combined attack. A spirit of insubordination, however, in several corps, and a project of Soult to destroy Ballasteros and capture Tarifa, dissipated this alarm; and the indefatigable Hill, advancing again into Estremadura, obtained some advantages over the enemy; who, in consequence, evacuated Merida. On the side of Valencia, Suchet was carrying every thing before him: having reduced Tarragona and Montserrat, the French marshal advanced against Murviedro, which he took by storm, as well as its strong citadel, built on the site of the ancient Saguntum: his invasion was protected by the French army of the north, which, menacing Gallicia, fixed the allies on the Agueda; while in the province itself every thing was favorable to his designs; for he was opposed in the field by the incapable Blake, between whose faction and that of Palacios the captain general, a violent enmity existed. After the fall of Saguntum, Suchet commenced operations against the large and powerful city of Valencia, in which he had enclosed Blake's army as in a net: on the second of December, the Spanish general, floundering like a huge fish,

endeavoured to break the meshes, and escape; but he was driven back into the toils, and the last day of the year saw the city completely invested.

CHAP.
LII.
1811.

The gallant conduct of the British army, though it begins to occupy so large a space in our annals, must not render us forgetful of that other invincible arm of defence, the navy: the seas indeed had been so cleared of antagonists, that an opportunity of putting forth its strength now rarely occurred: this year, however, some brilliant actions took place, which showed plainly that the valor and skill of our naval heroes remained unimpaired. Early in March, a squadron of four frigates, of which three carried only thirty-two guns each, and the other thirty-eight, under the command of captain Hoste, discovered five French frigates, of much larger size, with one corvette, four brigs, two schooners, a xebec, and a gun boat, off the island of Lissa, to which they were conveying 500 troops, with materials necessary for its fortification. The enemy, as soon as they perceived the British squadron, endeavored to turn against us our own system of naval tactics, and bore down in two divisions to the attack: the attempt, however, to break our line did not succeed; and the result proved that there is something beyond this manœuvre to which our naval superiority and success must be ascribed. The French commodore next attempted to round the van of the British ships, and so, by engaging to leeward, place them between two fires; but in the act of wearing for this purpose, his frigate of forty-four guns went on shore among the rocks, and was soon afterwards blown up: undismayed by this accident, the enemy still persevered in the attempt, passing with their starboard division under the stern of the British ships, and engaging them to leeward; while their larboard division tacked and remained to windward: still, though they displayed more than their usual skill, activity, and courage, they found adversaries superior to them on all these points: they could make no serious impression on our ships; but in about two hours after the commencement of the action, their two frigates,

Naval
affairs.

CHAP.
LII.

1811.

which had fought to leeward, struck their colors: the other division then attempted to escape, but were closely pursued, and a vessel here also was compelled to strike: but the *Flora*, one of the two which first surrendered, took advantage of circumstances to escape; and though reclaimed by captain Hoste, was kept by the French, under a pretence that her colors were not struck, but cut down by a shot. The British commodore was raised to the dignity of a baronet for this splendid achievement; and many of his officers were promoted.

A gallant exploit was also performed at Sagone-bay, in the island of Corsica, by the *Pomone*, *Unité*, and *Scout*, under captain Barrie, who burned three armed vessels laden with timber for the dock-yards at Toulon, though protected by strong batteries, a martello tower, and 200 soldiers. Another action off the coast of France partook of a different character, and showed British seamen capable of deceiving, as well as conquering, their foe. On the twenty-fourth of August, captain Ferris, of the *Diana* frigate, in company with captain Richardson, of the *Semiramis*, discovered four ships at the mouth of the Garonne, within the shoals, and protected by some armed vessels: as they could not be attacked openly, captain Ferris resolved to employ a stratagem, which required the utmost promptitude and coolness in the execution: the British frigates boldly approached under French colors; and so completely were the enemy deceived, that pilots came on board, by whose direction and assistance they anchored, after dark, near the batteries at the river's mouth: the boats, seven in number, were then sent four miles up the Garonne, where the French convoy lay; and the tide, though at first adverse, becoming favorable, their success was complete: still there was danger in passing the armed vessels; but the same artifice was continued so effectually, that the captain of one of them, who was also port-captain, came on board the *Diana* to offer his services; not being aware that it was an English ship till he stood on the deck. In a short time two were captured; but it was not

possible for the enemy to be longer deceived, and the batteries opened on the English frigates; yet the *Semiramis*, as if in contempt of their fire, pursued, drove on shore, and burned under their very guns, the brig, whose captain had been decoyed on board the *Diana*. Five vessels rewarded the captors; who lost not a single man, and had only three wounded in this enterprise.

CHAP.
LII.
1811.

In the Indian sea, three French frigates, which had been despatched with a reinforcement of troops for the Mauritius, but too late to prevent its capture, were pursued by a British squadron of three frigates and a brig; when one was taken; another escaped after she had struck her colours; and the third, having proceeded to Tamatava-bay, in the isle of Madagascar, was there captured, with the fort, and vessels in harbor.

To the farthest region of the East victory still accompanied the British arms: a formidable expedition against the Dutch settlements in Java was fitted out and accompanied by lord Minto; the command of the troops being entrusted to sir Samuel Auchmuty, an excellent officer, who had rendered himself honorably conspicuous in the unfortunate affair at Buenos Ayres. On the fourth of August, a landing was effected, about twelve miles eastward of the city of Batavia, which surrendered on the eighth without resistance; the garrison retreating, first to Welterzeede, and then to an intrenched position which surrounds fort Cornelis: on the twenty-sixth, a general assault of the works was ordered; when the lines were forced, the fort was stormed, and the whole army of the enemy killed, taken, or dispersed. General Jansens, its commander, fled with a small number of horsemen; but being pursued, was soon obliged to capitulate: the whole island was now delivered from the heavy yoke of Holland, to taste the blessings of a just, humane, and liberal government, but afterwards to be transferred again to the foul and pestilent administration of its ancient oppressors: for the present however, to use the words of lord Minto, 'the British nation

CHAP.
LII.

1811.

Election of
a chancellor
at Cambridge.

had neither an enemy nor a rival from the Cape of Good Hope to Cape Horn.'

Before we conclude the annals of this year, a memorable contest, which took place at Cambridge, requires our notice. On the death of the duke of Grafton, two candidates started for the chancellorship of that distinguished university; his royal highness the duke of Gloucester, and his grace the duke of Rutland. The former of these exalted personages, being the first prince of the blood who had received his education at an English university, depended for success on the character which he had acquired during his residence there, and the strong attachment which he had subsequently cherished for that seat of learning: the latter, as if undervaluing his own personal qualifications, which were confessedly great, relied more on the vast parliamentary interest which he had obtained, by what was termed 'the boroughmongering system;' as well as on the decided support of government, which he had the imprudence to set forth in a circular addressed to the electors. The consequence might easily have been anticipated: his antagonist gained the election by a majority of 100 votes in 840.

APPENDIX.

No. I. p. 33.

LETTER TO THE EDITOR OF GALIGNANI'S JOURNAL, FROM LORD
DE SAUMAREZ.

‘ Sir,

‘ In a former paper you made some just and pertinent remarks on ‘ M. Thiers’s History,’ particularly as to the spirit in which he describes some of our naval achievements. His account of the battle of Algesiras is partial and incorrect, and his assertion that the English ship the *Pompei* was so roughly handled by the French *Desaix* as to be obliged to strike her flag is positively false. My attention has since been called to his account of the sequel of that action, which was fought six days after, in which short space of time the British admiral, who I am proud to call my father, repaired the damages his little squadron had received in such a manner as to lead lord Vincent, then first lord of the admiralty, on moving the thanks of the house of lords for the subsequent victory, to pronounce it ‘ an achievement which surpassed every thing he had met with in his reading or service.’ In this account the writer asserts that admiral Saumarez had carried his rancor so far as to put on board his ships furnaces for red-hot shot, and that it was with these that the *Superb* set fire to the *San Carlos*, one of the two Spanish three-deckers that were burnt. Nothing can be more unfounded than this statement ; but it seems a report to this effect had got about soon after the action, and which led to the British admiral to call upon Don Mazzaredo, the Spanish admiral at Cadiz, to contradict it, and which he did in the most handsome and unqualified terms, as will be seen by the following extract from a letter in my possession :—

VOL. V.

I I

‘Esteemed sir, Isle of Leon, August 17, 1801.

‘The reports which have been current that the burning of the two royal ships on the nights of the 12th and 13th of July arose from the use of red-hot balls which were fired at them have existed only among the ignorant public, and have not received credit from any persons of condition, who well know the manner of combating in the British navy. At the same time they give the greatest credit to the assertion of your excellency, that nothing could be more foreign from the truth, from the characteristic humanity of the British nation, and from what I have myself experienced of the particular conduct of your excellency. I will avail myself of every occasion to assure your excellency of the esteem and consideration which I profess for your person. God grant you may live a thousand years.

‘Your most obedient servant,

(Signed)

‘JOSEPH MAZZAREDO.

‘To his excellency rear-admiral Saumarez.’

‘If M. Thiers’s work were circulated only in England I might not think this refutation necessary; but in the hope through your widely circulated journal it may meet the eye of foreigners, and possibly of M. Thiers himself, I shall feel much obliged by its insertion.

‘I am, &c.,

‘Cheltenham, May 19.’

‘DE SAUMAREZ.’

No. II. p. 216.

LETTER OF LORD ST. VINCENT TO W. MARSDEN, ESQ.

‘Sir,

March, 1807.

‘I desire you will convey to the lords commissioners of the admiralty the lively sense I feel of the approbation their lordships have been pleased to express of the zeal with which I have endeavored to serve my king and country, in carrying into execution the important duties of the station assigned me, and how much I lament that the frequent return of the complaint with which I have been for some time past afflicted leaves me no hope of being able to perform the various services comprehended in the command of the channel fleet, with advantage to his majesty’s arms, and satisfaction to my own mind. I am therefore under the painful necessity of repeating the request I had the honor to make through you, to their lordships, in my letter of the 26th instant.

‘I am, sir, &c.,

‘ST. VINCENT.’

TO THE RIGHT HON. THOMAS GRENVILLE.

‘ Sir, Mortimer-street, April 1, 1807.

‘ No language can express my feelings on the receipt of your more than kind letter, of the 28th of March. My heart is so full, I can only give it vent by assuring you that to the last hour of my life I shall endeavor to give proofs of the high respect, esteem, and regard with which I have the honor to be, &c.,

‘ ST. VINCENT.’

END OF VOL. V.

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